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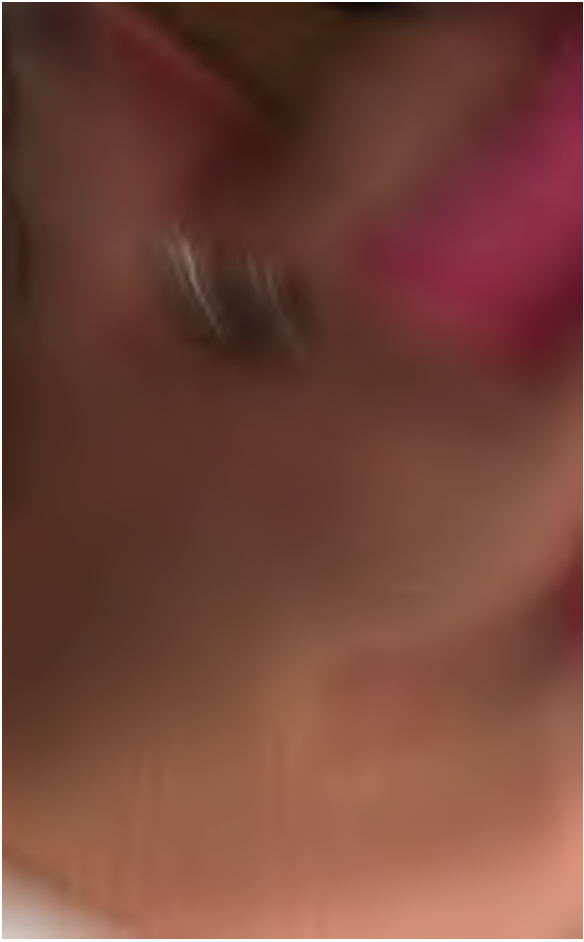

Works

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THE WORKS OF THE GREEK AND ROMAN POETS,

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE.

VOL. III.

CONTAINING THE

FIRST AND SECOND VOLUMES

OF

POPE'S VERSION OF THE ODYSSEY.

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HOMER

Close to her head the pleasing vision stands,
And thus performs Minerva's high commands.

Odyssey Book iv.

Painted by [illegible]

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THE

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OF

HOMER;

TRANSLATED

BY ALEXANDER POPE.

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A

GENERAL VIEW

OF THE

EPIC POEM,

AND OF

THE ILIAD AND ODYSSEY;

EXTRACTED FROM BOSSU.

SECT. I.

THE NATURE OF EPIC POETRY.

THE fables of poets were originally employed in representing the Divine Nature, according to the notion then conceived of it. This sublime subject occasioned the first poets to be called divines, and poetry the language of the gods. They divided the divine attributes into so many persons; because the infirmity of a human mind cannot sufficiently conceive, or explain, so much power and action in a simplicity so great and indivisible as that of God. And perhaps they were also jealous of the advantages they reaped from such excellent and exalted

learning, and of which they thought the vulgar part of mankind was not worthy.

They could not describe the operations of this almighty cause, without speaking at the same time of its effects: so that to divinity they added physiology, and treated of both, without quitting the umbrages of their allegorical expressions.

But man being the chief and most noble of all that God produced, and nothing being so proper, or more useful, to poets than this subject, they added it to the former, and treated of the doctrine of morality after the same manner as they did that of divinity and physiology: and from morality thus treated, is formed that kind of poem and fable which we call epic.

The poets did the same in morality, that the divines had done in divinity. But that infinite variety of the actions and operations of the Divine Nature (to which our understanding bears so small a proportion) did as it were force them upon dividing the single idea of the only one God into several persons, under the different names of Jupiter, Juno, Neptune, and the rest.

And, on the other hand, the nature of moral philosophy being such, as never to treat of things in particular, but in general, the epic poets were obliged to unite in one single idea, in one and the same person, and in an action which appeared singular, all that looked like it in different persons, and in various actions; which might be thus contained as so many species under their genus.

The presence of the Deity, and the care such an august cause is to be supposed to take about any action, obliges the poet to represent this action

as great, important, and managed by kings and princes [1]. It obliges him likewise to think and speak in an elevated way, above the vulgar, and in a style that may in some sort keep up the character of the divine persons he introduces. [2] To this end serve the poetical and figurative expression, and the majesty of the heroic verse.

But all this, being divine and surprising, may quite ruin all probability: therefore the poet should take a peculiar care as to that point, since his chief aim is to instruct, and without probability any action is less likely to persuade.

Lastly, since precepts ought to be concise [3], to be the more easily conceived, and less oppress the memory, and since nothing can be more effectual to this end than proposing one single idea, and collecting all things so well together, as to be present to our minds all at once; therefore the poets have reduced all to one single action [4], under one and the same design, and in a body whose members and parts should be homogeneous.

What we have observed of the nature of the epic poem gives us a just idea of it, and we may define it thus:

'The epic poem is a discourse invented by art,

[1] 'Res gestæ regumque ducumque.' HOR. Art. Poet.

[2] '——————— Cui mens divinior atque os
Magna sonaturum, des Nominis hujus honorem.'
HORAT.

[3] 'Quicquid præcipies esto brevis, ut citò dicta
Percipiant animi dociles, teneantque fideles.'
HOR. Poet.

[4] 'Denique sit quodvis simplex duntaxat, et unum.'
HOR. Poet.

to form the manners, by such instructions as are disguised under the allegories of some one important action, which is related in verse, after a probable, diverting, and surprising manner.'

SECT. II.

THE FABLE OF THE ILIAD.

In every design which a man deliberately undertakes, the end he proposes is the first thing in his mind, and that by which he governs the whole work, and all its parts: thus, since the end of the epic poem is to regulate the manners, it is with this first view the poet ought to begin.

But there is a great difference between the philosophical and the poetical doctrine of manners. The schoolmen content themselves with treating of virtues and vices in general: the instructions they give are proper for all states of people, and for all ages. But the poet has a nearer regard to his own country, and the necessities of his own nation. With this design he makes choice of some piece of morality, the most proper and just he can imagine: and in order to press this home, he makes less use of the force of reasoning, than of the power of insinuation; accommodating himself to the particular customs and inclinations of those who are to be the subject, or the readers, of his work.

Let us now see how Homer has acquitted himself in these respects.

He saw the Grecians, for whom he designed his poem, were divided into as many states as they had

capital cities. Each was a body politic apart, and had its form of government independent from all the rest. And yet these distinct states were very often obliged to unite together in one body against their common enemies. These were two very different sorts of government, such as could not be comprehended in one maxim of morality, and in one single poem.

The poet therefore has made two distinct fables of them. The one is for Greece in general, united into one body, but composed of parts independent on each other; and the other for each particular state, considered as they were in time of peace, without the former circumstances and the necessity of being united.

As for the first sort of government, in the union, or rather in the confederacy, of many independent states, experience has always made it appear, 'That nothing so much causes success as a due subordination, and a right understanding among the chief commanders. And on the other hand, the inevitable ruin of such confederacies proceeds from the heats, jealousies, and ambition of the different leaders, and the discontents of submitting to a single general.' All sorts of states, and in particular the Grecians, had dearly experienced this truth. So that the most useful and necessary instruction that could be given them, was, to lay before their eyes the loss which both the people and the princes must of necessity suffer, by the ambition, discord, and obstinacy of the latter.

Homer then has taken for the foundation of his fable this great truth; that a misunderstanding between princes is the ruin of their own states. 'I

sing (says he) the anger of Achilles, so pernicious to the Grecians, and the cause of so many heroes' deaths, occasioned by the discord and separation of Agamemnon and that prince.'

But that this truth may be completely and fully known, there is need of a second to support it. It is necessary in such a design, not only to represent the confederate states at first disagreeing among themselves, and from thence unfortunate, but to show the same states afterwards reconciled and united, and of consequence victorious.

Let us now see how he has joined all these in one general action.

'Several princes independent on one another were united against a common enemy. The person whom they had elected their general, offers an affront to the most valiant of all the confederates. This offended prince is so far provoked as to relinquish the union, and obstinately refuse to fight for the common cause. This misunderstanding gives the enemy such an advantage, that the allies are very near quitting their design with dishonour. He himself who made the separation is not exempt from sharing the misfortune which he brought upon his party: for having permitted his intimate friend to succour them in a great necessity, this friend is killed by the enemy's general. Thus the contending princes, being both made wiser at their own cost, are reconciled, and unite again: then this valiant prince not only obtains the victory in the public cause, but revenges his private wrongs by killing with his own hands the author of the death of his friend.'

This is the first platform of the poem, and the

fiction which reduces into one important and universal action all the particulars upon which it turns.

In the next place, it must be rendered probable by the circumstances of times, places, and persons: some persons must be found out, already known by history or otherwise, whom we may with probability make the actors and personages of this fable. Homer has made choice of the siege of Troy, and feigned that this action happened there. To a phantom of his brain, whom he would paint valiant and choleric, he has given the name of Achilles; that of Agamemnon to his general; that of Hector to the enemy's commander; and so to the rest.

Besides, he was obliged to accommodate himself to the manners, customs, and genius of the Greeks his auditors, the better to make them attend to the instruction of his poem, and to gain their approbation by praising them; so that they might the better forgive him the representation of their own faults in some of his chief personages. He admirably discharges all these duties, by making these brave princes and those victorious people all Grecians, and the fathers of those he had a mind to commend.

But not being content, in a work of such a length, to propose only the principal point of the moral, and to fill up the rest with useless ornaments and foreign incidents, he extends this moral by all its necessary consequences. As, for instance, in the subject before us, it is not enough to know, that a good understanding ought always to be maintained among confederates; it is likewise of equal importance, that if there happens any division, care must be taken to keep it secret from the enemy, that their ignorance of this advantage may prevent their

making use of it. And in the second place, when their concord is but counterfeit and only in appearance, one should never press the enemy too closely; for this would discover the weakness which we ought to conceal from them.

The episode of Patroclus most admirably furnishes us with these two instructions; for when he appeared in the arms of Achilles, the Trojans, who took him for that prince now reconciled and united to the confederates, immediately gave ground, and quitted the advantages they had before over the Greeks. But Patroclus, who should have been contented with this success, presses upon Hector too boldly, and by obliging him to fight, soon discovers that it was not the true Achilles who was clad in his armour, but a hero of much inferior prowess. So that Hector kills him, and regains those advantages which the Trojans had lost, on the opinion that Achilles was reconciled.

SECT. III.

THE FABLE OF THE ODYSSEY.

The Odyssey was not designed, like the Iliad, for instruction of all the states of Greece joined in one body, but for each state in particular. As a state is composed of two parts, the head which commands and the members which obey, there are instructions requisite to both, to teach the one to govern, and the others to submit to government.

There are two virtues necessary to one in authority, prudence to order, and care to see his orders

put in execution. The prudence of a politician is not acquired but by a long experience in all sorts of business, and by an acquaintance with all the different forms of governments and states. The care of the administration suffers not him that has the government to rely upon others, but requires his own presence; and kings who are absent from their states are in danger of losing them, and give occasion to great disorders and confusion.

These two points may be easily united in one and the same man. 'A king forsakes his kingdom to visit the courts of several princes, where he learns the manners and customs of different nations. From hence there naturally arises a vast number of incidents, of dangers, and of adventures, very useful for a political institution. On the other side, this absence gives way to the disorders which happen in his own kingdom, and which end not till his return, whose presence only can re-establish all things.' Thus the absence of a king has the same effects in this fable, as the division of the princes had in the former.

The subjects have scarce any need but of one general maxim, which is, To suffer themselves to be governed, and to obey faithfully, whatever reason they may imagine against the orders they receive. It is easy to join this instruction with the other, by bestowing on this wise and industrious prince such subjects, as in his absence would rather follow their own judgment than his commands; and by demonstrating the misfortunes which this disobedience draws upon them, the evil consequences which almost infallibly attend these particular no-

tions, which are entirely different from the general idea of him who ought to govern.

But as it was necessary that the princes in the Iliad should be choleric and quarrelsome, so it is necessary in the fable of the Odyssey that the chief person should be sage and prudent. This raises a difficulty in the fiction; because this person ought to be absent for the two reasons aforementioned, which are essential to the fable, and which constitute the principal aim of it: but he cannot absent himself, without offending against another maxim of equal importance, viz. That a king should upon no account leave his country.

It is true, there are sometimes such necessities as sufficiently excuse the prudence of a politician in this point. But such a necessity is a thing important enough of itself to supply matter for another poem, and this multiplication of the action would be vicious. To prevent which, in the first place, this necessity and the departure of the hero must be disjoined from the poem; and in the second place, the hero having been obliged to absent himself, for a reason antecedent to the action, and placed distinct from the fable, he ought not so far to embrace this opportunity of instructing himself, as to absent himself voluntarily from his own government. For at this rate, his absence would be merely voluntary, and one might with reason lay to his charge all the disorders which might arise.

Thus in the constitution of the fable he ought not to take for his action, and for the foundation of his poem, the departure of a prince from his own country, nor his voluntary stay in any other place; but his return, and this return retarded against his

will. This is the first idea Homer gives us of it. His hero [5] appears at first in a desolate island, sitting upon the side of the sea, which with tears in his eyes he looks upon as the obstacle that had so long opposed his return, and detained him from revisiting his own dear country.

And lastly, since this forced delay might more naturally and usually happen to such as make voyages by sea, Homer has judiciously made choice of a prince whose kingdom was in an island.

Let us see then how he has feigned all this action, making his hero a person in years, because years are requisite to instruct a man in prudence and policy.

'A prince had been obliged to forsake his native country, and to head an army of his subjects in a foreign expedition. Having gloriously performed this enterprise, he was marching home again, and conducting his subjects to his own state; but, spite of all the attempts with which the eagerness to return had inspired him, he was stopped by the way by tempests for several years, and cast upon several countries differing from each other in manners and government. In these dangers, his companions, not always following his orders, perished through their own fault. The grandees of his country strangely abuse his absence, and raise no small disorders at home. They consume his estate, conspire to destroy his son, would constrain his queen to accept of one of them for her husband; and indulge themselves in all violence, so much the more, because they were persuaded he would never return. But at last he returns, and discovering himself only to his son and some others, who had

[5] Odyssey v.

continued firm to him, he is an eye-witness of the insolence of his enemies, punishes them according to their deserts, and restores to his island that tranquillity and repose to which they had been strangers during his absence.'

As the truth, which serves for foundation to this fiction, is, that the absence of a person from his own home, or his neglect of his own affairs, is the cause of great disorders; so the principal point of the action, and the most essential one, is the absence of the hero. This fills almost all the poem; for not only this real absence lasted several years, but even when the hero returned he does not discover himself: and this prudent disguise, from whence he reaped so much advantage, has the same effect upon the authors of the disorders, and all others who knew him not, as his real absence had before; so that he is absent as to them till the very moment of their punishment.

After the poet had thus composed his fable, and joined the fiction to the truth, he then made choice of Ulysses, the king of the isle of Ithaca, to maintain the character of his chief personage, and bestowed the rest upon Telemachus, Penelope, Antinous, and others, whom he calls by what names he pleases.

I shall not here insist upon the many excellent advices, which are so many parts and natural consequences of the fundamental truth; and which the poet very dexterously lays down in those fictions which are the episodes and members of the entire action. Such for instance are these advices;—Not to intrude oneself into the mysteries of government, which the prince keeps secret:

this is represented to us by the winds shut up in a bull's hide, which the miserable companions of Ulysses would needs be so foolish as to pry into. Not to suffer oneself to be led away by the seeming charms of an idle and inactive life, to which the Sirens' song [6] invited. Not to suffer oneself to be sensualized by pleasures, like those who were changed into brutes by Circe: and a great many other points of morality necessary for all sorts of people.

This poem is more useful to the people than the Iliad, where the subjects suffer rather by the ill conduct of their princes than through their own miscarriages. But in the Odyssey it is not the fault of Ulysses that is the ruin of his subjects. This wise prince leaves untried no method to make them partakers of the benefit of his return. Thus the poet in the Iliad says, 'He sings the anger of Achilles, which had caused the death of so many Grecians;' and, on the contrary, in the Odyssey [7] he tells his readers, 'That the subjects perished through their own fault.'

SECT. IV.

OF THE UNITY OF THE FABLE.

ARISTOTLE bestows great encomiums upon Homer for the simplicity of his design, because he has included in one single part all that happened at the siege of Troy. And to this he opposes the igno-

6 'Improba Siren desidia.' HORAT.

7 Αυτων γαρ σφετερησιν ατασθαλιησιν ὀλοντο. ODYSS. ι.

rance of some poets, who imagined that the unity of the fable or action was sufficiently preserved by the unity of the hero; and who composed their Theseids, Heracleids, and the like, wherein they only heaped up in one poem every thing that happened to one personage.

He finds fault with those poets who were for reducing the unity of the fable into the unity of the hero, because one man may have performed several adventures which it is impossible to reduce under any one general and simple head. This reducing of all things to unity and simplicity is what Horace likewise makes his first rule:

'Denique sit quodvis simplex duntaxat, et unum.'

According to these rules, it will be allowable to make use of several fables, or, to speak more correctly, of several incidents which may be divided into several fables; provided they are so ordered that the unity of the fable be not spoiled. This liberty is still greater in the epic poem, because it is of a larger extent, and ought to be entire and complete.

I will explain myself more distinctly by the practice of Homer.

No doubt but one might make four distinct fables out of these four following instructions:

1. 'Division between those of the same party exposes them entirely to their enemies.'

2. 'Conceal your weakness, and you will be dreaded as much as if you had none of those imperfections of which they are ignorant.'

3. 'When your strength is only feigned, and

founded only in the opinion of others, never venture so far as if your strength was real.'

4. 'The more you agree together, the less hurt can your enemies do you.'

It is plain, I say, that each of these particular maxims might serve for the groundwork of a fiction, and one might make four distinct fables out of them. May not one then put all these into one single epopea? Not unless one single fable can be made out of all. The poet indeed may have so much skill as to unite all into one body as members and parts, each of which taken asunder would be imperfect; and if he joins them so, this conjunction shall be no hinderance at all to the unity and the regular simplicity of the fable. This is what Homer has done with such success in the composition of the Iliad.

1. 'The division between Achilles and his allies tended to the ruin of their designs.' 2. 'Patroclus comes to their relief in the armour of this hero, and Hector retreats.' 3. 'But this young man, pushing the advantage which his disguise gave him too far, ventures to engage with Hector himself; but not being master of Achilles' strength (whom he only represented in outward appearance) he is killed, and by this means leaves the Grecian affairs in the same disorder, from which in that disguise he came to free them.' 4. 'Achilles, provoked at the death of his friend, is reconciled, and revenges his loss by the death of Hector.' These various incidents being thus united, do not make different actions and fables, but are only the incomplete and unfinished parts of one and the same action and

fable, which alone, when taken thus complexly, can be said to be complete and entire: and all these maxims of the moral are easily reduced into these two parts, which in my opinion cannot be separated without enervating the force of both. The two parts are these [8], That a right understanding is the preservation, and discord the destruction, of states.

Though then the poet has made use of two parts in his poems, each of which might have served for a fable, as we have observed, yet this multiplication cannot be called a vicious and irregular polymythia, contrary to the necessary unity and simplicity of the fable; but it gives the fable another qualification, altogether necessary and regular, namely, its perfection and finishing stroke.

SECT V.

OF THE ACTION OF THE EPIC POEM.

THE action of a poem is the subject which the poet undertakes, proposes, and builds upon. So that the moral and the instructions which are the end of the epic poem are not the matter of it. Those the poets leave in their allegorical and figurative obscurity. They only give notice at the exordium, that they sing some action: the revenge of Achilles, the return of Ulysses, &c.

Since then the action is the matter of a fable, it is evident that whatever incidents are essential to

[8] 'Concordiâ res parvæ crescunt: discordiâ magnæ dilabuntur.' SALLUST. de Bello Jug.

the fable, or constitute a part of it, are necessary also to the action, and are parts of the epic matter, none of which ought to be omitted. Such, for instance, are the contention of Agamemnon and Achilles, the slaughter Hector makes in the Grecian army, the reunion of the Greek princes; and, lastly, the resettlement and victory which was the consequence of that reunion.

There are four qualifications in the epic action; the first is its unity, the second its integrity, the third its importance, the fourth its duration.

The unity of the epic action, as well as the unity of the fable, does not consist either in the unity of the hero, or in the unity of time: three things I suppose are necessary to it. The first is, to make use of no episode but what arises from the very platform and foundation of the action, and is as it were a natural member of the body. The second is, exactly to unite these episodes and these members with one another. And the third is, never to finish any episode so as it may seem to be an entire action; but to let each episode still appear, in its own particular nature, as the member of a body, and as a part of itself not complete.

OF THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE, AND END OF THE ACTION.

Aristotle not only says that the epic action should be one, but adds, that it should be entire, perfect, and complete; and for this purpose ought to have a beginning, a middle, and an end. These three parts of a whole are too generally and universally denoted by the words, beginning, middle, and end; we may interpret them more precisely, and say,

that the causes and designs of an action are the beginning; that the effects of these causes, and the difficulties that are met with in the execution of these designs, are the middle; and that the unravelling and resolution of these difficulties are the end.

THE ACTION OF THE ILIAD.

Homer's design in the Iliad is to relate the anger and revenge of Achilles. The beginning of this action is the change of Achilles from a calm to a passionate temper. The middle is the effects of his passion, and all the illustrious deaths it is the cause of. The end of this same action is the return of Achilles to his calmness of temper again. All was quiet in the Grecian camp, when Agamemnon their general provokes Apollo against them, whom he was willing to appease afterwards at the cost and prejudice of Achilles, who had no part in his fault. This then is an exact beginning; it supposes nothing before, and requires after it the effects of this anger. Achilles revenges himself, and that is an exact middle; it supposes before it the anger of Achilles, this revenge is the effect of it. Then this middle requires after it the effects of this revenge, which is the satisfaction of Achilles: for the revenge had not been complete, unless Achilles had been satisfied. By this means the poet makes his hero, after he was glutted by the mischief he had done to Agamemnon, by the death of Hector, and the honour he did his friend, by insulting over his murderer; he makes him, I say, to be moved by the tears and misfortunes of king Priam. We see him as calm at the end of the poem, during the

funeral of Hector, as he was at the beginning of the poem, whilst the plague raged among the Grecians. This end is just, since the calmness of temper Achilles re-enjoyed, is only an effect of the revenge which ought to have preceded: and after this nobody expects any more of his anger. Thus has Homer been very exact in the beginning, middle, and end of the action he made choice of for the subject of his Iliad.

THE ACTION OF THE ODYSSEY.

His design in the Odyssey was to describe the return of Ulysses from the siege of Troy, and his arrival at Ithaca. He opens this poem with the complaints of Minerva against Neptune, who opposed the return of this hero, and against Calypso, who detained him in an island from Ithaca. Is this a beginning? No; doubtless, the reader would know why Neptune is displeased with Ulysses, and how this prince came to be with Calypso? He would know how he came from Troy thither? The poet answers his demands out of the mouth of Ulysses himself, who relates these things, and begins the action by the recital of his travels from the city of Troy. It signifies little whether the beginning of the action be the beginning of the poem. The beginning of this action is that which happens to Ulysses, when upon his leaving Troy he bends his course for Ithaca. The middle comprehends all the misfortunes he endured, and all the disorders of his own government. The end is the reinstating of the hero in the peaceable possession of his kingdom, where he was acknowledged by his son, his wife, his father, and several others.

The poet was sensible he should have ended ill, had he gone no further than the death of these princes, who were the rivals and enemies of Ulysses, because the reader might have looked for some revenge which the subjects of these princes might have taken on him who had killed their sovereigns; but this danger over, and the people vanquished and quieted, there was nothing more to be expected. The poem and the action have all their parts, and no more.

But the order of the Odyssey differs from that of the Iliad, in that the poem does not begin with the beginning of the action.

OF THE CAUSES AND BEGINNING OF THE ACTION.

The causes of the action are also what the poet is obliged to give an account of. There are three sorts of causes, the humours, the interests, and the designs of men; and these different causes of an action are likewise often the causes of one another, every man taking up those interests in which his humour engages him, and forming those designs to which his humour and interest incline him. Of all these the poet ought to inform his readers, and render them conspicuous in his principal personages.

Homer has ingeniously begun his Odyssey with the transactions at Ithaca, during the absence of Ulysses. If he had begun with the travels of his hero, he would scarce have spoken of any one else; and a man might have read a great deal of the poem, without conceiving the least idea of Telemachus, Penelope, or her suitors, who had so great a share in the action; but in the beginning he has pitched

upon, besides these personages whom he discovers, he represents Ulysses in his full length; and from the very first opening one sees the interest which the gods take in the action.

The skill and care of the same poet may be seen likewise in inducing his personages in the first book of his Iliad, where he discovers the humours, the interests, and the designs of Agamemnon, Achilles, Hector, Ulysses, and several others, and even of the deities. And in his second, he makes a review of the Grecian and Trojan armies; which is full evidence, that all we have here said is very necessary.

OF THE MIDDLE OR INTRIGUE OF THE ACTION.

As these causes are the beginning of the action, the opposite designs against that of the hero are the middle of it, and form that difficulty, or intrigue, which makes up the greatest part of the poem; the solution or unravelling commences when the reader begins to see that difficulty removed, and the doubts cleared up. Homer has divided each of his poems into two parts, and has put a particular intrigue, and the solution of it, into each part.

The first part of the Iliad is the anger of Achilles, who is for revenging himself upon Agamemnon by the means of Hector and the Trojans. The intrigue comprehends the three days fight which happened in the absence of Achilles: and it consists on one side in the resistance of Agamemnon and the Grecians, and on the other in the revengeful and inexorable humour of Achilles, which would not suffer him to be reconciled. The loss of the Grecians, and the despair of Agamemnon, prepare for a solution by the satisfaction which the incensed

hero received from it. The death of Patroclus, joined to the offers of Agamemnon, which of themselves had proved ineffectual, remove this difficulty, and make the unravelling of the first part.

This death is likewise the beginning of the second part; since it puts Achilles upon the design of revenging himself on Hector. But the design of Hector is opposite to that of Achilles: this Trojan is valiant, and resolved to stand on his own defence. This valour and resolution of Hector are on his part the cause of the intrigue. All the endeavours Achilles used to meet with Hector, and be the death of him; and the contrary endeavours of the Trojan to keep out of his reach, and defend himself, are the intrigue; which comprehends the battle of the last day. The unravelling begins at the death of Hector; and besides that, it contains the insulting of Achilles over his body, the honours he paid to Patroclus, and the intreaties of king Priam. The regrets of this king, and the other Trojans, in the sorrowful obsequies they paid to Hector's body, end the unravelling; they justify the satisfaction of Achilles, and demonstrate his tranquillity.

The first part of the Odyssey is the return of Ulysses into Ithaca. Neptune opposed it by raising tempests, and this makes the intrigue. The unravelling is the arrival of Ulysses upon his own island, where Neptune could offer him no further injury. The second part is the reinstating this hero in his own government. The princes that are his rivals, oppose him, and this is a fresh intrigue: the solution of it begins at their deaths, and is completed as soon as the Ithacans were appeased.

These two parts in the Odyssey have not one

common intrigue. The anger of Achilles forms both the intrigues in the Iliad; and it is so far the matter of this epopea, that the very beginning and end of this poem depend on the beginning and end of this anger. But let the desire Achilles had to revenge himself, and the desire Ulysses had to return to his own country, be never so near allied, yet we cannot place them under one and the same notion: for that desire of Ulysses is not a passion that begins and ends in the poem with the action; it is a natural habit: nor does the poet propose it for his subject, as he does the anger of Achilles.

We have already observed what is meant by the intrigue, and the unravelling thereof; let us now say something of the manner of forming both. These two should arise naturally out of the very essence and subject of the poem, and are to be deduced from thence. Their conduct is so exact and natural, that it seems as if their action had presented them with whatever they inserted, without putting themselves to the trouble of a further inquiry.

What is more usual and natural to warriors, than anger, heat, passion, and impatience of bearing the least affront or disrespect? This is what forms the intrigue of the Iliad; and every thing we read there is nothing else but the effect of this humour and these passions.

What more natural and usual obstacle to those who take voyages, than the sea, the winds, and the storms? Homer makes this the intrigue of the first part of the Odyssey: and for the second, he makes use of almost the infallible effect of the long absence of a master, whose return is quite despaired

of, viz. the insolence of his servants and neighbours, the danger of his son and wife, and the sequestration of his estate. Besides, an absence of almost twenty years, and the insupportable fatigues joined to the age of which Ulysses then was, might induce him to believe that he should not be owned by those who thought him dead, and whose interest it was to have him really so. Therefore, if he had presently declared who he was, and had called himself Ulysses, they would easily have destroyed him as an impostor, before he had an opportunity to make himself known.

There could be nothing more natural nor more necessary than this ingenious disguise, to which the advantages his enemies had taken of his absence had reduced him, and to which his long misfortunes had inured him. This allowed him an opportunity, without hazarding any thing, of taking the best measures he could, against those persons who could not so much as mistrust any harm from him. This way was afforded him, by the very nature of his action, to execute his designs, and overcome the obstacles it cast before him. And it is this contest between the prudence and the dissimulation of a single man on one hand, and the ungovernable insolence of so many rivals on the other, which constitutes the intrigue of the second part of the Odyssey.

OF THE END OR UNRAVELLING OF THE ACTION.

If the plot or intrigue must be natural, and such as springs from the subject, as has been already urged, then the winding-up of the plot, by a more sure claim, must have this qualification, and be a

probable consequence of all that went before. As this is what the readers regard more than the rest, so should the poet be more exact in it. This is the end of the poem, and the last impression that is to be stamped upon them.

We shall find this in the Odyssey. Ulysses by a tempest is cast upon the island of the Phæacians, to whom he discovers himself, and desires they would favour his return to his own country, which was not very far distant. One cannot see any reason why the king of this island should refuse such a reasonable request to a hero whom he seemed to have in great esteem. The Phæacians indeed had heard him tell the story of his adventures; and in this fabulous recital consisted all the advantage that he could derive from his presence; for the art of war which they admired in him, his undauntedness under dangers, his indefatigable patience, and other virtues, were such as these islanders were not used to. All their talent lay in singing and dancing, and whatsoever was charming in a quiet life. And here we see how dexterously Homer prepares the incidents he makes use of. These people could do no less, for the account with which Ulysses had so much entertained them, than afford him a ship and a safe convoy, which was of little expence or trouble to them.

When he arrived, his long absence, and the travels which had disfigured him, made him altogether unknown; and the danger he would have incurred, had he discovered himself too soon, forced him to a disguise: lastly, this disguise gave him an opportunity of surprising those young suitors, who for several years together had been accustomed to nothing but to sleep well, and fare daintily.

It was from these examples that Aristotle drew this rule, that 'Whatever concludes the poem should so spring from the very constitution of the fable, as if it were a necessary, or at least a probable, consequence.'

SECT. VI.

THE TIME OF THE ACTION.

THE time of the epic action is not fixed, like that of the dramatic poem: it is much longer; for an uninterrupted duration is much more necessary in an action which one sees and is present at, than in one which we only read or hear repeated. Besides, tragedy is fuller of passion, and consequently of such a violence as cannot admit of so long a duration.

The Iliad containing an action of anger and violence, the poet allows it but a short time, about forty days. The design of the Odyssey required another conduct; the character of the hero is prudence and long-suffering; therefore the time of its duration is much longer, above eight years.

THE PASSIONS OF THE EPIC POEM.

The passions of tragedy are different from those of the epic poem. In the former, terror and pity have the chief place; the passion that seems most peculiar to epic poetry, is admiration.

Besides this admiration, which in general distinguishes the epic poem from the dramatic, each epic poem has likewise some peculiar passion, which distinguishes it in particular from other epic poems, and constitutes a kind of singular and individual

difference between these poems of the same species. These singular passions correspond to the character of the hero. Anger and terror reign throughout the Iliad, because Achilles is angry, and the most terrible of all men. The Æneid has all the soft and tender passions, because that is the character of Æneas. The prudence, wisdom, and constancy, of Ulysses do not allow him either of these extremes, therefore the poet does not permit one of them to be predominant in the Odyssey. He confines himself to admiration only, which he carries to an higher pitch than in the Iliad: and it is upon this account that he introduces a great many more machines in the Odyssey, into the body of the action, than are to be seen in the actions of the other two poems.

THE MANNERS.

The manners of the epic poem ought to be poetically good, but it is not necessary they be always morally so. They are poetically good, when one may discover the virtue or vice, the good or ill inclinations, of every one who speaks or acts: they are poetically bad, when persons are made to speak or act out of character, or inconsistently, or unequally. The manners of Æneas and of Mezentius are equally good, considered poetically, because they equally demonstrate the piety of the one, and the impiety of the other.

CHARACTER OF THE HERO.

It is requisite to make the same distiction between a hero in morality, and a hero in poetry, as between moral and poetical goodness. Achilles

had as much right to the latter as Æneas. Aristotle says, that the hero of a poem should be neither good nor bad: neither advanced above the rest of mankind by his virtues, nor sunk beneath by his vices; that he may be the proper and fuller example to others, both what to imitate and what to decline.

The other qualifications of the manners are, that they be suitable to the causes which either raise or discover them in the persons; that they have an exact resemblance to what history, or fable, have delivered of those persons to whom they are ascribed; and that there be an equality in them, so that no man is made to act, or speak, out of his character.

UNITY OF THE CHARACTER.

But this equality is not sufficient for the unity of the character; it is further necessary, that the same spirit appear in all sorts of encounters. Thus Æneas acting with great piety and mildness in the first part of the Æneid, which requires no other character; and afterwards appearing illustrious in heroic valour, in the wars of the second part; but there, without any appearance either of a hard or a soft disposition; would, doubtless, be far from offending against the equality of the manners: but yet there would be no simplicity or unity in the character. So that, besides the qualities that claim their particular place upon different occasions, there must be one appearing throughout, which commands over all the rest; and without this, we may affirm, it is no character.

One may indeed make a hero as valiant as

Achilles, as pious as Æneas, and as prudent as Ulysses. But it is a mere chimæra to imagine a hero that has the valour of Achilles, the piety of Æneas, and the prudence of Ulysses, at one and the same time. This vision might happen to an author, who would suit the character of a hero to whatever each part of the action might naturally require, without regarding the essence of the fable, or the unity of the character in the same person upon all sorts of occasions: this hero would be the mildest, best-natured, prince in the world, and also the most choleric, hard-hearted, and implacable creature imaginable; he would be extremely tender like Æneas, extremely violent like Achilles, and yet have the indifference of Ulysses, that is incapable of the two extremes. Would it not be in vain for the poet to call this person by the same name throughout?

Let us reflect on the effects it would produce in several poems, whose authors were of opinion, that the chief character of a hero is that of an accomplished man. They would be all alike; all valiant in battle, prudent in council, pious in the acts of religion, courteous, civil, magnificent, and, lastly, endued with all the prodigious virtues any poet could invent. All this would be independent of the action and the subject of the poem; and, upon seeing each hero separated from the rest of the work, we should not easily guess, to what action, and to what poem, the hero belonged. So that we should see, that none of those would have a character, since the character is that which makes a person discernible, and which distinguishes him from all others.

This commanding quality in Achilles is his anger, in Ulysses the art of dissimulation, in Æneas meekness. Each of these may be styled, by way of eminence, the character in these heroes.

But these characters cannot be alone. It is absolutely necessary that some other should give them a lustre, and embellish them as far as they are capable; either by hiding the defects that are in each, by some noble and shining qualities, as the poet has done the anger of Achilles by shading it with extraordinary valour; or by making them of the nature of a true and solid virtue, as is to be observed in the two others. The dissimulation of Ulysses is a part of his prudence; and the meekness of Æneas is wholly employed in submitting his will to the gods. For the making up this union, our poets have joined together such qualities as are by nature the most compatible; valour with anger, meekness with piety, and prudence with dissimulation. This last union was necessary for the goodness of Ulysses; for without that, his dissimulation might have degenerated into wickedness and double-dealing.

SECT VII.

OF THE MACHINERY.

We come now to the machines of the epic poem. The chief passion which it aims to excite being admiration, nothing is so conducive to that as the marvellous; and the importance and dignity of the action is by nothing so greatly elevated as by the care and interposition of heaven.

The machines are of three sorts. Some are theological, and were invented to explain the nature of the gods. Others are physical, and represent the things of nature. The last are moral, and are the images of virtues and vices.

Homer and the ancients have given to their deities the manners, passions, and vices of men. Their poems are wholly allegorical; and in this view it is easier to defend Homer, than to blame him. We cannot accuse him for making mention of many gods, for his bestowing passions upon them, or even introducing them fighting against men. The Scripture uses the like figures and expressions.

If it be allowable to speak thus of the gods in theology, much more in the fictions of natural philosophy, where if a poet describes the deities, he must give them such manners, speeches, and actions, as are conformable to the nature of the things they represent under those divinities. The case is the same in the morals of the deities: Minerva is wise because she represents prudence; Venus is both good or bad, because the passion of love is capable of these contrary qualities.

Since among the gods of a poem some are good, some bad, and some indifferently either; and since of our passions we make so many allegorical deities; we may attribute to the gods all that is done in the poem, whether good or evil. But these deities do not act constantly in one and the same manner.

Sometimes they act invisibly, and by mere inspiration; which has nothing in it extraordinary or miraculous: being no more than what we say every day, 'That some god has assisted us, or some dæmon has instigated us.'

At other times they appear visibly, and manifest themselves to men, in a manner altogether miraculous and preternatural.

The third way has something of both the others; it is in truth a miracle, but is not commonly so accounted: this includes dreams, oracles, &c.

All these ways must be probable; for, however necessary the marvellous is to the epic action, as nothing is so conducive to admiration; yet we can, on the other hand, admire nothing that we think impossible. Though the probability of these machines be of a very large extent (since it is founded upon divine power), it is not without limitations. There are numerous instances of allowable and probable machines in the epic poem, where the gods are no less actors than the men. But the less credible sort, such as metamorphoses, &c. are far more rare.

This suggests a reflection on the method of rendering those machines probable, which in their own nature are hardly so. Those which require only divine probability, should be so disengaged from the action, that one might subtract them from it, without destroying the action. But those which are essential and necessary, should be grounded upon human probability, and not on the sole power of God. Thus the episodes of Circe, the Syrens, Polyphemus, &c. are necessary to the action of the Odyssey, and yet not humanly probable: yet Homer has artificially reduced them to human probability, by the simplicity and ignorance of the Phæacians, before whom he causes those recitals to be made.

The next question is, Where, and on what occasions, machines may be used? It is certain Homer and Virgil make use of them every where, and scarce suffer any action to be performed without them. Petronius makes this a precept: 'Per ambages, deorumque ministeria, &c.' The gods are mentioned in the very proposition of their works, the invocation is addressed to them, and the whole narration is full of them. The gods are the causes of the action, they form the intrigue, and bring about the solution. The precept of Aristotle and Horace, that the unravelling of the plot should not proceed from a miracle, or the appearance of a god, has place only in dramatic poetry, not in the epic. For it is plain, that both in the solution of the Iliad and Odyssey, the gods are concerned: in the former, the deities meet to appease the anger of Achilles: Iris and Mercury are sent to that purpose, and Minerva eminently assists Achilles in the decisive combat with Hector. In the Odyssey, the same goddess fights close by Ulysses against the suitors, and concludes that peace betwixt him and the Ithacensians which completes the poem.

We may therefore determine, that a machine is not an invention to extricate the poet out of any difficulty which embarrasses him: but that the presence of a divinity, and some action surprising and extraordinary, are inserted into almost all the parts of his work, in order to render it more majestic and more admirable. But this mixture ought to be so made, that the machines might be retrenched, without taking any thing from the action: at the same time that it gives the readers a lesson of piety

and virtue; and teaches them, that the most brave and the most wise can do nothing, and attain nothing great and glorious, without the assistance of heaven. Thus the machinery crowns the whole work, and renders it at once marvellous, probable, and moral.

THE

FIRST BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

MINERVA'S DESCENT TO ITHACA.

THE poem opens within forty-eight days of the arrival of Ulysses in his dominions. He had now remained seven years in the island of Calypso, when the gods assembled in council proposed the method of his departure from thence, and his return to his native country. For this purpose it is concluded to send Mercury to Calypso, and Pallas immediately descends to Ithaca. She holds a conference with Telemachus, in the shape of Mentes king of the Taphians; in which she advises him to take a journey, in quest of his father Ulysses, to Pylos and Sparta, where Nestor and Menelaüs yet reigned; then, after having visibly displayed her divinity, disappears. The suitors of Penelope make great entertainments, and riot in her palace till night. Phemius sings to them the return of the Grecians, till Penelope puts a stop to the song. Some words arise between the suitors and Telemachus, who summons the council to meet the day following.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK I.

The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Long exercis'd in woes, O muse! resound;
Who, when his arms had wrought the destin'd fall
Of sacred Troy, and raz'd her heaven-built wall,
Wandering from clime to clime, observant stray'd,
Their manners noted, and their states survey'd.
On stormy seas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal shore:
Vain toils! their impious folly dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day;
The god vindictive doom'd them never more
(Ah, men unbless'd!) to touch that natal shore.
O snatch some portion of these acts from fate,
Celestial muse! and to our world relate.
Now at their native realms the Greeks arriv'd;
All who the war of ten long years surviv'd,
And scap'd the perils of the gulfy main.
Ulysses, sole of all the victor train,
An exile from his dear paternal coast,
Deplor'd his absent queen, and empire lost.
Calypso in her caves constrain'd his stay,
With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay:

In vain—for now the circling years disclose
The day predestin'd to reward his woes.
At length his Ithaca is given by fate,
Where yet new labours his arrival wait;
At length their rage the hostile powers restrain,
All but the ruthless monarch of the main.
But now the god, remote, a heavenly guest,
In Ethiopia grac'd the genial feast;
(A race divided, whom with sloping rays
The rising and descending sun surveys);
There on the world's extremest verge, rever'd
With hecatombs and prayer in pomp preferr'd,
Distant he lay; while in the bright abodes
Of high Olympus Jove conven'd the gods:
The' assembly thus the sire supreme address'd,
Egysthus' fate revolving in his breast,
Whom young Orestes to the dreary coast
Of Pluto sent, a blood-polluted ghost:
'Perverse mankind! whose wills, created free,
Charge all their woes on absolute decree;
All to the dooming gods their guilt translate,
And follies are miscall'd the crimes of fate.
When to his lust Egysthus gave the rein,
Did fate, or we, the' adulterous act constrain?
Did fate, or we, when great Atrides died,
Urge the bold traitor to the regicide?
Hermes I sent, while yet his soul remain'd
Sincere from royal blood, and faith profan'd;
To warn the wretch, that young Orestes, grown
To manly years, should re-assert the throne.
Yet impotent of mind, and uncontroll'd,
He plung'd into the gulf which heaven foretold.'
Here paus'd the god; and pensive thus replies
Minerva, graceful with her azure eyes:

'O thou! from whom the whole creation springs,
The source of power on earth deriv'd to kings!
His death was equal to the direful deed;
So may the man of blood be doom'd to bleed!
But grief and rage alternate wound my breast
For brave Ulysses, still by fate oppress'd.
Amidst an isle, around whose rocky shore
The forests murmur, and the surges roar,
The blameless hero from his wish'd-for home
A goddess guards in her enchanted dome.
(Atlas her sire, to whose far-piercing eye
The wonders of the deep expanded lie;
The' eternal columns which on earth he rears
End in the starry vault, and prop the spheres.)
By his fair daughter is the chief confin'd,
Who soothes to dear delight his anxious mind:
Successless all her soft caresses prove,
To banish from his breast his country's love;
To see the smoke from his lov'd palace rise,
While the dear isle in distant prospect lies,
With that contentment could he close his eyes!
And will Omnipotence neglect to save
The suffering virtue of the wise and brave?
Must he, whose altars on the Phrygian shore
With frequent rites, and pure, avow'd thy pow'r,
Be doom'd the worst of human ills to prove,
Unbless'd, abandon'd to the wrath of Jove?'
'Daughter! what words have pass'd thy lips unweigh'd?
(Replied the thunderer to the martial maid)
Deem not unjustly by my doom oppress'd
Of human race the wisest and the best.
Neptune, by prayer repentant rarely won,
Afflicts the chief, to' avenge his giant son,

Whose visual orb Ulysses robb'd of light;
Great Polypheme, of more than mortal might!
Him young Thoösa bore (the bright increase
Of Phorcys, dreaded in the sounds and seas),
Whom Neptune ey'd with bloom of beauty bless'd,
And in his cave the yielding nymph compress'd.
For this, the god constrains the Greek to roam,
A hopeless exile from his native home,
From death alone exempt—but cease to mourn;
Let all combine to' achieve his wish'd return:
Neptune, aton'd, his wrath shall now refrain,
Or thwart the synod of the gods in vain.'
'Father and king ador'd! Minerva cried,
Since all who in the' Olympian bower reside
Now make the wandering Greek their public care,
Let Hermes to the' Atlantic isle [1] repair;
Bid him, arriv'd in bright Calypso's court,
The sanction of the' assembled powers report:
That wise Ulysses to his native land
Must speed, obedient to their high command.
Meantime Telemachus, the blooming heir
Of sea-girt Ithaca, demands my care:
'Tis mine, to form his green unpractis'd years,
In sage debates; surrounded with his peers,
To save the state; and timely to restrain
The bold intrusion of the suitor-train;
Who crowd his palace, and with lawless pow'r
His herds and flocks in feastful rites devour.
To distant Sparta, and the spacious waste
Of sandy Pyle, the royal youth shall haste.
There, warm with filial love, the cause inquire
That from his realm retards his godlike sire:

[1] Ogygia.

Delivering early to the voice of fame
The promise of a great, immortal, name.'
She said: the sandals of celestial mould,
Fledg'd with ambrosial plumes, and rich with gold,
Surround her feet: with these sublime she sails
The' aërial space, and mounts the winged gales:
O'er earth and ocean wide prepar'd to soar,
Her dreaded arm a beamy javelin bore,
Ponderous and vast; which, when her fury burns,
Proud tyrants humbles, and whole hosts o'erturns.
From high Olympus prone her flight she bends,
And in the realm of Ithaca descends.
Her lineaments divine, the grave disguise
Of Mentes' form conceal'd from human eyes:
(Mentes, the monarch of the Taphian land)
A glittering spear wav'd awful in her hand.
There in the portal plac'd, the heaven-born maid
Enormous riot and misrule survey'd.
On hides of beeves, before the palace-gate,
(Sad spoils of luxury) the suitors sat.
With rival art, and ardour in their mien,
At chess they vie, to captivate the queen;
Divining of their loves. Attending nigh,
A menial train the flowing bowl supply:
Others, apart, the spacious hall prepare,
And form the costly feast with busy care.
There young Telemachus, his bloomy face
Glowing celestial sweet, with godlike grace
Amid the circle shines: but hope and fear
(Painful vicissitude!) his bosom tear.
Now imag'd in his mind, he sees restor'd,
In peace and joy, the people's rightful lord;
The proud oppressors fly the vengeful sword.

While his fond soul these fancied triumphs swell'd,
The stranger-guest, the royal youth beheld:
Griev'd that a visitant so long should wait
Unmark'd, unhonour'd, at a monarch's gate;
Instant he flew with hospitable haste,
And the new friend with courteous air embrac'd.
'Stranger! whoe'er thou art, securely rest,
Affianc'd in my faith, a friendly guest:
Approach the dome, the social banquet share,
And then the purpose of thy soul declare.'
Thus affable and mild, the prince precedes,
And to the dome the' unknown celestial leads.
The spear receiving from her hand, he plac'd
Against a column, fair with sculpture grac'd;
Where seemly rang'd in peaceful order stood
Ulysses' arms, now long disus'd to blood.
He led the goddess to the sovereign seat,
Her feet supported with a stool of state;
(A purple carpet spread the pavement wide)
Then drew his seat, familiar, to her side;
Far from the suitor-train, a brutal crowd,
With insolence, and wine, elate and loud;
Where the free guest, unnoted, might relate,
If haply conscious, of his father's fate.
The golden ewer a maid obsequious brings,
Replenish'd from the cool translucent springs;
With copious water the bright vase supplies
A silver laver, of capacious size:
They wash. The tables in fair order spread,
They heap the glittering canisters with bread:
Viands of various kinds allure the taste,
Of choicest sort and savour, rich repast!
Delicious wines the' attending herald brought;
The gold gave lustre to the purple draught.

Lur'd with the vapour of the fragrant feast,
In rush'd the suitors with voracious haste:
Marshall'd in order due, to each a sewer
Presents, to bathe his hands, a radiant ewer.
Luxurious then they feast. Observant round
Gay stripling youths the brimming goblets crown'd.
The rage of hunger quell'd, they all advance,
And form to measur'd airs the mazy dance.
To Phemius was consign'd the chorded lyre,
Whose hand reluctant touch'd the warbling wire:
Phemius, whose voice divine could sweetest sing
High strains, responsive to the vocal string.
Meanwhile, in whispers to his heavenly guest
His indignation thus the prince express'd:
'Indulge my rising grief, whilst these, my friend,
With song and dance the pompous revel end.
Light is the dance, and doubly sweet the lays,
When, for the dear delight, another pays.
His treasur'd stores these cormorants consume,
Whose bones, defrauded of a regal tomb
And common turf, lie naked on the plain,
Or doom'd to welter in the whelming main.
Should he return, that troop so blithe and bold,
With purple robes inwrought, and stiff with gold,
Precipitant in fear, would wing their flight,
And curse their cumbrous pride's unwieldy weight.
But, ah, I dream!—the' appointed hour is fled,
And hope, too long with vain delusion fed,
Deaf to the rumour of fallacious fame,
Gives to the roll of death his glorious name!
With venial freedom let me now demand
Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land:
Sincere, from whence began thy course, recite,
And to what ship I owe the friendly freight?

Now first to me this visit dost thou deign,
Or number'd in my father's social train?
All who deserv'd his choice he made his own,
And curious much to know, he far was known.'
' My birth I boast (the blue-ey'd virgin cries)
From great Anchialus, renown'd and wise:
Mentes my name; I rule the Taphian race,
Whose bounds the deep circumfluent waves em-
A duteous people, and industrious isle, [brace:
To naval arts inur'd, and stormy toil.
Freighted with iron from my native land,
I steer my voyage to the Brutian strand;
To gain by commerce, for the labour'd mass,
A just proportion of refulgent brass.
Far from your capital, my ship resides
At Reithrus, and secure at anchor rides;
Where waving groves on airy Neion grow,
Supremely tall, and shade the deeps below.
Thence to revisit your imperial dome,
An old hereditary guest I come:
Your father's friend. Laertes can relate
Our faith unspotted, and its early date;
Who press'd with heart-corroding grief and years,
To the gay court a rural shed prefers,
Where, sole of all his train, a matron sage
Supports with homely food his drooping age;
With feeble steps from marshalling his vines
Returning sad, when toilsome day declines.
With friendly speed, induc'd by erring fame,
To hail Ulysses' safe return I came:
But still the frown of some celestial pow'r
With envious joy retards the blissful hour.
Let not your soul be sunk in sad despair;
He lives, he breathes this heavenly vital air,

Among a savage race, whose shelfy bounds
With ceaseless roar the foaming deep surrounds.
The thoughts which roll within my ravish'd breast,
To me, no seer, the' inspiring gods suggest;
Nor skill'd, nor studious, with prophetic eye
To judge the winged omens of the sky.
Yet hear this certain speech, nor deem it vain;
Though adamantine bonds the chief restrain,
The dire restraint his wisdom will defeat,
And soon restore him to his regal seat.
But, generous youth! sincere and free declare,
Are you, of manly growth, his royal heir?
For sure Ulysses in your look appears,
The same his features, if the same his years.
Such was that face, on which I dwelt with joy
Ere Greece assembled stemm'd the tides to Troy;
But parting then for that detested shore,
Our eyes, unhappy! never greeted more.'
'To prove a genuine birth (the prince replies)
On female truth assenting faith relies;
Thus manifest of right, I build my claim
Sure-founded on a fair maternal fame,
Ulysses' son: but happier he whom fate
Hath plac'd beneath the storms which toss the great!
Happier the son whose hoary sire is bless'd
With humble affluence, and domestic rest!
Happier than I, to future empire born,
But doom'd a father's wretched fate to mourn!'
To whom, with aspect mild, the guest divine:
'O true descendant of a sceptred line!
The gods, a glorious fate, from anguish free,
To chaste Penelope's increase decree.
But say, yon jovial troop so gaily dress'd,
Is this a bridal or a friendly feast?

Or from their deed I rightier may divine,
Unseemly flown with insolence and wine;
Unwelcome revellers, whose lawless joy
Pains the sage ear, and hurts the sober eye?
'Magnificence of old (the prince replied)
Beneath our roof with virtue could reside;
Unblam'd abundance crown'd the royal board,
What time this dome rever'd her prudent lord;
Who now, so heaven decrees, is doom'd to mourn,
Bitter constraint! erroneous and forlorn.
Better the chief, on Ilion's hostile plain,
Had fall'n surrounded with his warlike train;
Or safe return'd, the race of glory pass'd,
New to his friends' embrace, had breath'd his last!
Then grateful Greece with streaming eyes would raise
Historic marbles, to record his praise;
His praise, eternal on the faithful stone,
Had with transmissive honour grac'd his son.
Now snatch'd by harpies to the dreary coast,
Sunk is the hero, and his glory lost:
Vanish'd at once! unheard of, and unknown!
And I his heir in misery alone.
Nor for a dear lost father only flow
The filial tears, but woe succeeds to woe:
To tempt the spouseless queen with amorous wiles,
Resort the nobles from the neighbouring isles;
From Samos, circled with the' Ionian main,
Dulichium, and Zacynthus' sylvan reign:
E'en with presumptuous hope her bed to' ascend,
The lords of Ithaca their right pretend.
She seems attentive to their pleaded vows,
Her heart detesting what her ear allows.
They, vain expectants of the bridal hour,
My stores in riotous expence devour,

In feast and dance the mirthful months employ,
And meditate my doom, to crown their joy.'
With tender pity touch'd, the goddess cried:
'Soon may kind heaven a sure relief provide,
Soon may your sire discharge the vengeance due,
And all your wrongs the proud oppressors rue!
Oh! in that portal should the chief appear,
Each hand tremendous with a brazen spear,
In radiant panoply his limbs incas'd
(For so of old my father's court he grac'd,
When social mirth unbent his serious soul,
O'er the full banquet, and the sprightly bowl):
He then from Ephyré, the fair domain
Of Ilus, sprung from Jason's royal strain,
Measur'd a length of seas, a toilsome length, in vain.
For voyaging to learn the direful art
To taint with deadly drugs the barbed dart;
Observant of the gods, and sternly just,
Ilus refus'd to' impart the baneful trust:
With friendlier zeal my father's soul was fir'd,
The drugs he knew, and gave the boon desir'd.
Appear'd he now with such heroic port,
As then conspicuous at the Taphian court;
Soon should you boasters cease their haughty strife,
Or each atone his guilty love with life.
But of his wish'd return the care resign;
Be future vengeance to the powers divine.
My sentence hear: with stern distaste avow'd,
To their own districts drive the suitor-crowd:
When next the morning warms the purple east,
Convoke the peerage, and the gods attest;
The sorrows of your inmost soul relate;
And form sure plans to save the sinking state.

Should second love a pleasing flame inspire,
And the chaste queen connubial rites require;
Dismiss'd with honour, let her hence repair
To great Icarius, whose paternal care
Will guide her passion, and reward her choice
With wealthy dower, and bridal gifts of price.
Then let this dictate of my love prevail:
Instant, to foreign realms prepare to sail,
To learn your father's fortunes: fame may prove,
Or omen'd voice (the messenger of Jove),
Propitious to the search. Direct your toil
Through the wide ocean first to sandy Pyle;
Of Nestor, hoary sage, his doom demand:
Then speed your voyage to the Spartan strand;
For young Atrides to the' Achaian coast
Arriv'd the last of all the victor host.
If yet Ulysses views the light, forbear,
Till the fleet hours restore the circling year:
But if his soul hath wing'd the destin'd flight,
Inhabitant of deep disastrous night;
Homeward with pious speed repass the main,
To the pale shade funereal rites ordain.
Plant the fair column o'er the vacant grave,
A hero's honours let the hero have.
With decent grief the royal dead deplor'd,
For the chaste queen select an equal lord.
Then let revenge your daring mind employ,
By fraud or force the suitor-train destroy,
And, starting into manhood, scorn the boy.
Hast thou not heard how young Orestes, fir'd
With great revenge, immortal praise acquir'd?
His virgin sword, Egysthus' veins imbrued;
The murderer fell, and blood atoned for blood.

O greatly bless'd with every blooming grace!
With equal steps the paths of glory trace;
Join to that royal youth's your rival name,
And shine eternal in the sphere of fame.—
But my associates now my stay deplore,
Impatient on the hoarse-resounding shore.
Thou, heedful of advice, secure proceed;
My praise the precept is, be thine the deed.'

'The counsel of my friend (the youth rejoin'd)
Imprints conviction on my grateful mind.
So fathers speak (persuasive speech and mild)
Their sage experience to the favourite child.
But, since to part, for sweet refection due
The genial viands let my train renew;
And the rich pledge of plighted faith receive,
Worthy the heir of Ithaca to give.'

'Defer the promis'd boon (the goddess cries,
Celestial azure brightening in her eyes),
And let me now regain the Reithrian port:
From Temesé return'd, your royal court
I shall revisit; and that pledge receive;
And gifts, memorial of our friendship, leave.'

Abrupt, with eagle-speed she cut the sky;
Instant invisible to mortal eye.
Then first he recognis'd the' ethereal guest:
Wonder and joy alternate fire his breast;
Heroic thoughts, infus'd, his heart dilate:
Revolving much his father's doubtful fate,
At length, compos'd, he join'd the suitor-throng;
Hush'd in attention to the warbled song.
His tender theme the charming lyrist chose,
Minerva's anger, and the direful woes
Which voyaging from Troy the victors bore,
While storms vindictive intercept the shore.

The shrilling airs the vaulted roof rebounds,
Reflecting to the queen the silver sounds.
With grief renew'd the weeping fair descends;
Their sovereign's step a virgin train attends:
A veil of richest texture wrought, she wears,
And silent to the joyous hall repairs.
There from the portal, with her mild command,
Thus gently checks the minstrel's tuneful hand:

'Phemius! let acts of gods and heroes old,
What ancient bards in hall and bower have told,
Attemper'd to the lyre, your voice employ;
Such the pleas'd ear will drink with silent joy.
But oh! forbear that dear disastrous name,
To sorrow sacred, and secure of fame:
My bleeding bosom sickens at the sound,
And every piercing note inflicts a wound.'

'Why, dearest object of my duteous love,
(Replied the prince) will you the bard reprove?
Oft, Jove's ethereal rays, resistless fire,
The chanter's soul and raptur'd song inspire;
Instinct divine! nor blame, severe, his choice,
Warbling the Grecian woes with harp and voice:
For novel lays attract our ravish'd ears;
But old, the mind with inattention hears:
Patient permit the sadly-pleasing strain;
Familiar now with grief, your tears refrain,
And in the public woe forget your own;
You weep not for a perish'd lord, alone.
What Greeks, now wandering in the Stygian gloom,
With your Ulysses shar'd an equal doom!
Your widow'd hours, apart, with female toil
And various labours of the loom, beguile;
There rule, from palace-cares remote and free;
That care to man belongs, and most to me.'

Mature beyond his years, the queen admires
His sage reply, and with her train retires.
Then swelling sorrows burst their former bounds,
With echoing grief afresh the dome resounds;
Till Pallas, piteous of her plaintive cries,
In slumber clos'd her silver-streaming eyes.
Meantime, rekindled at the royal charms,
Tumultuous love each beating bosom warms;
Intemperate rage a wordy war began;
But bold Telemachus assum'd the man.
'Instant (he cried) your female discord end,
Ye deedless boasters! and the song attend;
Obey that sweet compulsion, nor profane
With dissonance the smooth melodious strain.
Pacific now prolong the jovial feast;
But when the dawn reveals the rosy east,
I to the peers assembled shall propose
The firm resolve, I here to few disclose.
No longer live the cankers of my court;
All to your several states with speed resort;
Waste in wild riot what your land allows,
There ply the early feast, and late carouse.
But if, to honour lost, 'tis still decreed
For you my bowl shall flow, my flock shall bleed;
Judge and revenge my right, impartial Jove!—
By him and all the' immortal thrones above,
(A sacred oath) each proud oppressor, slain,
Shall with inglorious gore this marble stain!'
Aw'd by the prince, thus haughty, bold, and young,
Rage gnaw'd the lip, and wonder chain'd the tongue.
Silence at length the gay Antinous broke,
Constrain'd a smile, and thus ambiguous spoke:
'What god to your untutor'd youth affords
This headlong torrent of amazing words?

May Jove delay thy reign, and cumber late
So bright a genius with the toils of state!'
'Those toils (Telemachus, serene, replies)
Have charms, with all their weight, to' allure the wise.
Fast by the throne obsequious fame resides,
And wealth incessant rolls her golden tides.
Nor let Antinous rage, if strong desire
Of wealth and fame a youthful bosom fire:
Elect by Jove his delegate of sway,
With joyous pride the summons I'd obey.
Whene'er Ulysses roams the realm of night,
Should factious power dispute my lineal right,
Some other Greeks a fairer claim may plead;
To your pretence their title would precede.
At least, the sceptre lost, I still should reign
Sole o'er my vassals, and domestic train.'
To this Eurymachus: 'To heaven alone
Refer the choice to fill the vacant throne.
Your patrimonial stores in peace possess;
Undoubted all your filial claim confess:
Your private right should impious power invade,
The peers of Ithaca would arm in aid.
But say, that stranger-guest who late withdrew,
What and from whence? his name and lineage shew.
His grave demeanour, and majestic grace,
Speak him descended of no vulgar race:
Did he some loan of ancient right require,
Or came forerunner of your sceptred sire?'
'O son of Polybus! (the prince replies,)
No more my sire will glad these longing eyes:
The queen's fond hope inventive rumour cheers,
Or vain diviners' dreams divert her fears.
That stranger-guest the Taphian realm obeys,
A realm defended with encircling seas.

Mentes, an ever-honour'd name, of old
High in Ulysses' social list enroll'd.'
Thus he, though conscious of the' ethereal guest,
Answer'd evasive of the sly request.
Meantime the lyre rejoins the sprightly lay;
Love-dittied airs, and dance, conclude the day.
But when the star of eve, with golden light
Adorn'd the matron-brow of sable night;
The mirthful train dispersing quit the court,
And to their several domes to rest resort.
A towering structure to the palace join'd;
To this his steps the thoughtful prince inclin'd;
In his pavilion there, to sleep repairs;
The lighted torch, the sage Eurycleа bears:
(Daughter of Ops, the just Pisenor's son,
For twenty beeves by great Laertes won;
In rosy prime with charms attractive grac'd,
Honour'd by him, a gentle lord and chaste,
With dear esteem: too wise, with jealous strife
To taint the joys of sweet connubial life.
Sole with Telemachus her service ends,
A child she nurs'd him, and a man attends.)
Whilst to his couch himself the prince address'd,
The duteous dame receiv'd the purple vest:
The purple vest with decent care dispos'd,
The silver ring she pull'd, the door reclos'd;
The bolt, obedient to the silken cord,
To the strong staple's inmost depth restor'd,
Secur'd the valves. There, wrapt in silent shade,
Pensive, the rules the goddess gave, he weigh'd;
Stretch'd on the downy fleece, no rest he knows,
And in his raptur'd soul the vision glows.

THE

SECOND BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE COUNCIL OF ITHACA.

TELEMACHUS, in the assembly of the lords of Ithaca, complains of the injustice done him by the suitors, and insists upon their departure from his palace; appealing to the princes, and exciting the people to declare against them. The suitors endeavour to justify their stay, at least till he shall send the queen to the court of Icarius her father; which he refuses. There appears a prodigy of two eagles in the sky, which an augur expounds to the ruin of the suitors. Telemachus then demands a vessel to carry him to Pylos and Sparta, there to inquire of his father's fortunes. Pallas in the shape of Mentor (an ancient friend of Ulysses) helps him to a ship, assists him in preparing necessaries for the voyage, and embarks with him that night; which concludes the second day from the opening of the poem.

The scene continues in the palace of Ulysses in Ithaca.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK II.

Now reddening from the dawn the morning ray
Glow'd in the front of heaven, and gave the day.
The youthful hero, with returning light,
Rose anxious from the' inquietudes of night.
A royal robe he wore with graceful pride,
A two-edg'd falchion threaten'd by his side,
Embroider'd sandals glitter'd as he trod,
And forth he mov'd majestic as a god.
Then by his heralds, restless of delay,
To council calls the peers: the peers obey.
Soon as in solemn form the' assembly sat,
From his high dome himself descends in state.
Bright in his hand a ponderous javelin shin'd;
Two dogs, a faithful guard, attend behind;
Pallas with grace divine his form improves,
And gazing crowds admire him as he moves.
  His father's throne he fill'd: while distant stood
The hoary peers, and aged wisdom bow'd.
  'Twas silence all. At last Ægyptius spoke:
Ægyptius, by his age and sorrows broke:
A length of days his soul with prudence crown'd,
A length of days had bent him to the ground.

His eldest hope [1] in arms to Ilion came,
By great Ulysses taught the path to fame;
But (hapless youth!) the hideous Cyclops tore
His quivering limbs, and quaff'd his spouting gore.
Three sons remain'd: to climb with haughty fires
The royal bed, Eurynomus aspires;
The rest with duteous love his griefs assuage,
And ease the sire of half the cares of age.
Yet still his Antiphus he loves, he mourns,
And as he stood, he spoke and wept by turns:
'Since great Ulysses sought the Phrygian plains,
Within these walls inglorious silence reigns.
Say then, ye peers! by whose commands we meet?
Why here once more in solemn council sit?
Ye young, ye old, the weighty cause disclose:
Arrives some message of invading foes?
Or say, does high necessity of state
Inspire some patriot, and demand debate:
The present synod speaks its author wise;
Assist him, Jove, thou regent of the skies!'
He spoke. Telemachus with transport glows,
Embrac'd the omen, and majestic rose;
(His royal hand the' imperial sceptre sway'd)
Then thus, addressing to Ægyptius, said:
'Reverend old man! lo here confess'd he stands
By whom ye meet; my grief your care demands.
No story I unfold of public woes,
Nor bear advices of impending foes:
Peace the bless'd land, and joys incessant crown;
Of all this happy realm, I grieve alone.
For my lost sire continual sorrows spring,
The great, the good: your father, and your king!
Yet more; our house from its foundation bows,
Our foes are powerful, and your sons the foes:

[1] Antiphus.

Hither, unwelcome to the queen, they come;
Why seek they not the rich Icarian dome?
If she must wed, from other hands require
The dowry: is Telemachus her sire;
Yet through my court the noise of revel rings,
And wastes the wise frugality of kings.
Scarce all my herds their luxury suffice;
Scarce all my wine their midnight hours supplies.
Safe in my youth, in riot still they grow,
Nor in the helpless orphan dread a foe.
But come it will, the time when manhood grants
More powerful advocates than vain complaints.
Approach that hour! unsufferable wrong
Cries to the gods, and vengeance sleeps too long.
Rise then, ye peers! with virtuous anger rise;
Your fame revere, but most the' avenging skies.
By all the deathless powers that reign above,
By righteous Themis and by thundering Jove,
(Themis, who gives to councils, or denies
Success; and humbles, or confirms the wise)
Rise in my aid! suffice the tears that flow
For my lost sire, nor add new woe to woe.
If e'er he bore the sword to strengthen ill,
Or having power to wrong, betray'd the will,
On me, on me your kindled wrath assuage,
And bid the voice of lawless riot rage.
If ruin to our royal race ye doom,
Be you the spoilers, and our wealth consume.
Then might we hope redress from juster laws,
And raise all Ithaca to aid our cause:
But while your sons commit the' unpunish'd wrong,
You make the arm of violence too strong.'
While thus he spoke, with rage and grief he frown'd,
And dash'd the' imperial sceptre to the ground.

The big round tear hung trembling in his eye;
The synod griev'd, and gave a pitying sigh,
Then silent sat—at length Antinous burns
With haughty rage, and sternly thus returns:
'O insolence of youth! whose tongue affords
Such railing eloquence, and war of words.
Studious thy country's worthies to defame,
Thy erring voice displays thy Mother's shame.
Elusive of the bridal day, she gives
Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.
Did not the sun, through heaven's wide azure roll'd,
For three long years the royal fraud behold!
While she, laborious in delusion spread
The spacious loom, and mix'd the various thread;
Where as to life the wondrous figures rise,
Thus spoke the' inventive queen, with artful sighs:
'Tho' cold in death Ulysses breathes no more,
Cease yet a while to urge the bridal hour;
Cease, till to great Laërtes I bequeath
A task of grief, his ornaments of death:
Lest when the fates his royal ashes claim,
The Grecian matrons taint my spotless fame;
When he, whom living mighty realms obey'd,
Shall want in death a shroud to grace his shade.'
Thus she: at once the generous train complies,
Nor fraud mistrusts in virtue's fair disguise.
The work she plied; but studious of delay,
By night revers'd the labours of the day.
While thrice the sun his annual journey made,
The conscious lamp the midnight fraud survey'd;
Unheard, unseen, three years her arts prevail;
The fourth, her maid unfolds the' amazing tale.
We saw, as unperceiv'd we took our stand,
The backward labours of her faithless hand.

Then urg'd, she perfects her illustrious toils;
A wondrous monument of female wiles!
'But you, O peers! and thou, O prince! give ear:
(I speak aloud, that every Greek may hear)
Dismiss the queen; and if her sire approves,
Let him espouse her to the peer she loves:
Bid instant to prepare the bridal train,
Nor let a race of princes wait in vain.
Though with a grace divine her soul is bless'd,
And all Minerva breathes within her breast,
In wondrous arts than woman more renown'd,
And more than woman with deep wisdom crown'd;
Though Tyro nor Mycene match her name,
Nor great Alcmena (the proud boasts of fame),
Yet thus by heaven adorn'd, by heaven's decree
She shines with fatal excellence, to thee:
With thee, the bowl we drain, indulge the feast,
Till righteous heaven reclaim her stubborn breast.
What though from pole to pole resounds her name!
The son's destruction waits the mother's fame:
For till she leaves thy court, it is decreed,
Thy bowl to empty, and thy flock to bleed.'
While yet he speaks, Telemachus replies:
'E'en nature starts, and what ye ask denies.
Thus, shall I thus repay a mother's cares,
Who gave me life, and nurs'd my infant years?
While sad on foreign shores Ulysses treads,
Or glides a ghost with unapparent shades;
How to Icarius in the bridal hour
Shall I, by waste undone, refund the dow'r?
How from my father should I vengeance dread;
How would my mother curse my hated head?
And while in wrath to vengeful fiends she cries,
How from their hell would vengeful fiends arise?

Abhorr'd by all, accurs'd my name would grow,
The earth's disgrace, and human-kind my foe.
If this displease, why urge ye here your stay?
Haste from the court, ye spoilers, haste away:
Waste in wild riot what your land allows,
There ply the early feast, and late carouse.
But if, to honour lost, 'tis still decreed
For you my bowl shall flow, my flocks shall bleed;
Judge and assert my right, impartial Jove!
By him, and all the' immortal host above,
(A sacred oath) if heaven the power supply,
Vengeance I vow, and for your wrongs ye die.
With that, two eagles from a mountain's height
By Jove's command direct their rapid flight;
Swift they descend, with wing to wing conjoin'd,
Stretch their broad plumes, and float upon the wind.
Above the' assembled peers they wheel on high,
And clang their wings, and hovering beat the sky;
With ardent eyes the rival train they threat,
And shrieking loud, denounce approaching fate.
They cuff, they tear; their cheeks and neck they rend,
And from their plumes huge drops of blood descend:
Then sailing o'er the domes and towers, they fly
Full toward the east, and mount into the sky.
The wondering rivals gaze with cares oppress'd,
And chilling horrors freeze in every breast.
Till big with knowledge of approaching woes
The prince of augurs, Halitherses, rose:
Prescient he view'd the' aërial tracks, and drew
A sure presage from every wing that flew.
'Ye sons (he cried) of Ithaca, give ear,
Hear all! but chiefly you, O rivals! hear.
Destruction sure o'er all your heads impends;
Ulysses comes, and death his steps attends.

Nor to the great alone is death decreed;
We, and our guilty Ithaca, must bleed.
Why cease we then the wrath of heaven to stay?
Be humbled all, and lead, ye great! the way.
For lo! my words no fancied woes relate:
I speak from science, and the voice is fate.
'When great Ulysses sought the Phrygian shores
To shake with war proud Ilion's lofty towers,
Deeds then undone my faithful tongue foretold:
Heaven seal'd my words, and you those deeds behold.
I see (I cried) his woes, a countless train;
I see his friends o'erwhelm'd beneath the main;
How twice ten years from shore to shore he roams:
Now twice ten years are past, and now he comes!'
To whom Eurymachus: 'Fly, dotard, fly!
With thy wise dreams, and fables of the sky.
Go, prophesy at home; thy sons advise:
Here thou art sage in vain—I better read the skies.
Unnumber'd birds glide through the' aërial way,
Vagrants of air, and unforeboding stray.
Cold in the tomb, or in the deeps below,
Ulysses lies: O wert thou laid as low!
Then would that busy head no broils suggest,
Nor fire to rage Telemachus's breast.
From him some bribe thy venal tongue requires,
And interest, not the god, thy voice inspires.
His guideless youth, if thy experienc'd age
Mislead fallacious into idle rage,
Vengeance deserv'd thy malice shall repress,
And but augment the wrongs thou would'st redress.
Telemachus may bid the queen repair
To great Icarius, whose paternal care
Will guide her passion, and reward her choice
With wealthy dower, and bridal gifts of price.

Till she retires, determin'd we remain,
And both the prince and augur threat in vain:
His pride of words, and thy wild dream of fate,
Move not the brave, or only move their hate.
Threat on, O prince! elude the bridal day,
Threat on, till all thy stores in waste decay.
True, Greece affords a train of lovely dames,
In wealth and beauty worthy of our flames:
But never from this nobler suit we cease;
For wealth and beauty less than virtue please.'
To whom the youth: 'Since then in vain I tell
My numerous woes, in silence let them dwell.
But heaven, and all the Greeks, have heard my wrongs:
To heaven, and all the Greeks, redress belongs.
Yet this I ask -nor be it ask'd in vain—
A bark to waft me o'er the rolling main;
The realms of Pyle and Sparta to explore,
And seek my royal sire from shore to shore:
If, or to fame his doubtful fate be known,
Or to be learn'd from oracles alone?
If yet he lives, with patience I forbear
Till the fleet hours restore the circling year:
But if already wandering in the train
Of empty shades, I measure back the main,
Plant the fair column o'er the mighty dead,
And yield his consort to the nuptial bed.'
He ceas'd; and while abash'd the peers attend,
Mentor arose, Ulysses' faithful friend:
[When fierce in arms he sought the scenes of war,
'My friend (he cried) my palace be thy care;
Years roll'd on years my godlike sire decay,
Guard thou his age, and his behests obey.']

Stern as he rose, he cast his eyes around,
That flash'd with rage: and, as he spoke, he frown'd:
'O never, never more let king be just,
Be mild in power, or faithful to his trust!
Let tyrants govern with an iron rod,
Oppress, destroy, and be the scourge of God;
Since he who like a father held his reign,
So soon forgot, was just and mild in vain!
True, while my friend is griev'd, his griefs I share;
Yet now the rivals are my smallest care:
They, for the mighty mischiefs they devise,
Ere long shall pay—their forfeit lives the price.
But against you, ye Greeks! ye coward train,
Gods! how my soul is mov'd with just disdain?
Dumb ye all stand, and not one tongue affords
His injur'd prince the little aid of words.'
While yet he spoke, Leocritus rejoin'd:
'O pride of words, and arrogance of mind!
Would'st thou to rise in arms the Greeks advise?
Join all your powers! in arms, ye Greeks, arise!
Yet would your powers in vain our strength oppose;
The valiant few o'ermatch an host of foes.
Should great Ulysses stern appear in arms,
While the bowl circles, and the banquet warms;
Though to his breast his spouse with transport flies,
Torn from her breast, that hour, Ulysses dies.
But hence retreating to your domes repair;
To arm the vessel, Mentor! be thy care,
And, Halitherses! thine: be each his friend;
Ye lov'd the father: go, the son attend,
But yet, I trust the boaster means to stay
Safe in the court, nor tempt the watry way.'
Then with a rushing sound, the' assembly bend,
Diverse their steps: the rival rout ascend

The royal dome; whilst sad the prince explores
The neighbouring main, and sorrowing treads the shores.
There, as the waters o'er his hands he shed,
The royal suppliant to Minerva pray'd:
'O goddess! who descending from the skies
Vouchsaf'd thy presence to my wondering eyes;
By whose commands the raging deeps I trace,
And seek my sire through storms and rolling seas!
Hear from thy heavens above, O warrior-maid!
Descend once more, propitious to my aid.
Without thy presence, vain is thy command;
Greece, and the rival train, thy voice withstand.'
Indulgent to his prayer, the goddess took
Sage Mentor's form, and thus like Mentor spoke:
'O prince! in early youth divinely wise,
Born, the Ulysses of thy age to rise!
If to the son the father's worth descends,
O'er the wide waves success thy ways attends:
To tread the walks of death he stood prepar'd,
And what he greatly thought, he nobly dar'd.
Were not wise sons descendant of the wise,
And did not heroes from brave heroes rise;
Vain were my hopes: few sons attain the praise
Of their great sires, and most their sires disgrace.
But since thy veins paternal virtue fires,
And all Penelope thy soul inspires,
Go, and succeed! the rivals' aims despise;
For never, never, wicked man was wise.
Blind they rejoice, though now, e'en now they fall;
Death hastes amain: one hour o'erwhelms them all.
And lo, with speed we plough the watry way;
My power shall guard thee, and my hand convey:

The winged vessel studious I prepare,
Through seas and realms companion of thy care.
Thou to the court ascend; and to the shores,
When night advances, bear the naval stores:
Bread, that decaying man with strength supplies,
And generous wine, which thoughtful sorrow flies.
Meanwhile the mariners by my command
Shall speed aboard, a valiant chosen band.
Wide o'er the bay, by vessel vessel rides;
The best I choose to waft thee o'er the tides.'
She spoke: to his high dome the prince returns,
And as he moves, with royal anguish mourns.
'Twas riot all, among the lawless train;
Boar bled by boar, and goat by goat lay slain.
Arriv'd, his hand the gay Antinous press'd,
And thus deriding, with a smile address'd:
'Grieve not, O daring prince! that noble heart;
Ill suits gay youth the stern heroic part.
Indulge the genial hour, unbend thy soul,
Leave thought to age, and drain the flowing bowl.
Studious to ease thy grief, our care provides
The bark, to waft thee o'er the swelling tides.'
'Is this (returns the prince) for mirth a time?
When lawless gluttons riot, mirth's a crime;
The luscious wines, dishonour'd, lose their taste;
The song is noise, and impious is the feast.
Suffice it to have spent with swift decay
The wealth of kings, and made my youth a prey.
But now the wise instructions of the sage,
And manly thoughts inspir'd by manly age,
Teach me to seek redress for all my woe,
Here, or in Pyle—in Pyle, or here, your foe.
Deny your vessels, ye deny in vain;
A private voyager I pass the main.

Free breathe the winds, and free the billows flow,
And where on earth I live, I live your foe.'
He spoke and frown'd, nor longer deign'd to stay,
Sternly his hand withdrew, and strode away.
Meantime, o'er all the dome, they quaff, they feast,
Derisive taunts were spread from guest to guest,
And each in jovial mood his mate address'd.
'Tremble ye not, O friends! and coward fly,
Doom'd by the stern Telemachus to die?
To Pyle or Sparta to demand supplies,
Big with revenge, the mighty warrior flies:
Or comes from Ephyré with poisons fraught,
And kills us all in one tremendous draught!'
'Or who can say (his gamesome mate replies)
But while the dangers of the deeps he tries,
He, like his sire, may sink depriv'd of breath,
And punish us unkindly by his death?
What mighty labours would he then create,
To seize his treasures, and divide his state,
The royal palace to the queen convey,
Or him she blesses in the bridal day!'
Meantime the lofty rooms the prince surveys,
Where lay the treasures of the' Ithacian race:
Here ruddy brass and gold refulgent blaz'd;
There polish'd chests embroider'd vestures grac'd;
Here jars of oil breath'd forth a rich perfume;
There casks of wine in rows adorn'd the dome.
(Pure flavorous wine, by gods in bounty given,
And worthy to exalt the feasts of heaven)
Untouch'd they stood, till, his long labours o'er,
The great Ulysses reach'd his native shore.
A double strength of bars secur'd the gates:
Fast by the door the wise Eurycleа waits;

Eurycleа, who, great Ops! thy lineage shar'd,
And watch'd all night, all day; a faithful guard.
To whom the prince: 'O thou, whose guardian care
Nurs'd the most wretched king that breathes the air;
Untouch'd and sacred may these vessels stand
Till great Ulysses views his native land.
But by thy care twelve urns of wine be fill'd,
Next these in worth, and firm those urns be seal'd;
And twice ten measures of the choicest flour
Prepar'd, ere yet descends the evening hour.
For when the favouring shades of night arise,
And peaceful slumbers close my mother's eyes,
Me from our coast shall spreading sails convey,
To seek Ulysses through the watery way.'
While yet he spoke, she fill'd the walls with cries,
And tears ran trickling from her aged eyes.
'O whither, whither flies my son?' she cried,
'To realms, that rocks and roaring seas divide?
In foreign lands thy father's days decay'd,
And foreign lands contain the mighty dead.
The watery way ill-fated if thou try,
All, all must perish, and by fraud you die!
Then stay, my child! storms beat, and rolls the main;
O beat those storms, and roll the seas in vain!'
'Far hence (replied the prince) thy fears be driven;
Heaven calls me forth; these counsels are of heaven.
But by the powers that hate the perjur'd, swear
To keep my voyage from the royal ear,
Nor uncompell'd the dangerous truth betray,
Till twice six times descends the lamp of day:
Lest the sad tale a mother's life impair,
And grief destroy what time awhile would spare.'
Thus he. The matron with uplifted eyes
Attests the' all-seeing sovereign of the skies.

Then studious she prepares the choicest flour,
The strength of wheat, and wines an ample store.
While to the rival train the prince returns,
The martial goddess with impatience burns;
Like thee, Telemachus, in voice and size,
With speed divine from street to street she flies,
She bids the mariners prepar'd to stand,
When night descends, embodied on the strand.
Then to Noëmon swift she runs, she flies,
And asks a bark: the chief a bark supplies.
  And now, declining with his sloping wheels,
Down sunk the sun behind the western hills.
The goddess shov'd the vessel from the shores,
And stow'd within its womb the naval stores.
Full in the openings of the spacious main
It rides: and now descends the sailor-train.
  Next, to the court, impatient of delay,
With rapid step the goddess urg'd her way:
There every eye with slumbrous chains she bound,
And dash'd the flowing goblet to the ground.
Drowsy they rose, with heavy fumes oppress'd,
Reel'd from the palace, and retir'd to rest.
  Then thus, in Mentor's reverend form array'd,
Spoke to Telemachus the martial maid:
'Lo! on the seas prepar'd the vessel stands,
The' impatient mariner thy speed demands.'
Swift as she spoke, with rapid pace she leads;
The footsteps of the deity he treads.
Swift to the shore they move: along the strand
The ready vessel rides, the sailors ready stand.
  He bids them bring their stores; the' attending train
Load the tall bark, and launch into the main.

The prince and goddess to the stern ascend;
To the strong stroke at once the rowers bend.
Full from the west she bids fresh breezes blow;
The sable billows foam and roar below.
The chief his orders gives: the' obedient band
With due observance wait the chief's command;
With speed the mast they rear, with speed unbind
The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind.
High o'er the roaring waves the spreading sails
Bow the tall mast, and swell before the gales;
The crooked keel the parting surge divides,
And to the stern retreating roll the tides.
And now they ship their oars, and crown with wine
The holy goblet to the powers divine:
Imploring all the gods that reign above,
But chief the blue-ey'd progeny of Jove.
  Thus all the night they stem the liquid way,
And end their voyage with the morning ray.

THE

THIRD BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE INTERVIEW OF TELEMACHUS AND NESTOR.

TELEMACHUS, guided by Pallas in the shape of Mentor, arrives in the morning at Pylos, where Nestor and his sons are sacrificing on the sea-shore to Neptune. Telemachus declares the occasion of his coming; and Nestor relates what passed in their return from Troy, how their fleets were separated, and he never since heard of Ulysses. The discourse concerning the death of Agamemnon, the revenge of Orestes, and the injuries of the suitors. Nestor advises him to go to Sparta, and inquire further of Menelaüs. The sacrifice ending with the night, Minerva vanishes from them in the form of an eagle: Telemachus is lodged in the palace. The next morning they sacrifice a bullock to Minerva, and Telemachus proceeds on his journey to Sparta, attended by Pisistratus.

The scene lies on the sea-shore of Pylos.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK III.

The sacred sun, above the waters rais'd,
Through heaven's eternal brazen portals blaz'd;
And wide o'er earth diffus'd his cheering ray,
To gods and men to give the golden day.
Now on the coast of Pyle the vessel falls,
Before old Neleus' venerable walls.
There, suppliant to the monarch of the flood,
At nine green theatres the Pylians stood;
Each held five hundred (a deputed train),
At each, nine oxen on the sand lay slain.
They taste the entrails, and the altars load
With smoking thighs, an offering to the god.
Full for the port the Ithacensians stand,
And furl their sails, and issue on the land.
Telemachus already press'd the shore;
Not first, the Power of wisdom march'd before,
And ere the sacrificing throng he join'd,
Admonish'd thus his well-attending mind:
'Proceed, my son! this youthful shame expel;
An honest business never blush to tell.
To learn what fates thy wretched sire detain,
We past the wide immeasurable main.

Meet then the senior, far renown'd for sense,
With reverend awe, but decent confidence:
Urge him with truth to frame his fair replies;
And sure he will; for wisdom never lies.'
'O tell me, Mentor! tell me, faithful guide,
(The youth with prudent modesty replied)
How shall I meet, or how accost the sage,
Unskill'd in speech, nor yet mature of age?
Awful the' approach, and hard the task appears,
To question wisely men of riper years.'
To whom the martial goddess thus rejoin'd:
'Search, for some thoughts, thy own suggesting mind;
And others, dictated by heavenly power,
Shall rise spontaneous in the needful hour:
For nought unprosperous shall thy ways attend,
Born with good omens, and with heaven thy friend.'
She spoke, and led the way with swiftest speed:
As swift, the youth pursued the way she led;
And join'd the band before the sacred fire,
Where sat, encompass'd with his sons, the sire.
The youth of Pylos, some on pointed wood
Transfix'd the fragments, some prepar'd the food.
In friendly throngs they gather, to embrace
Their unknown guests, and at the banquet place.
Pisistratus was first to grasp their hands,
And spread soft hides upon the yellow sands;
Along the shore the' illustrious pair he led,
Where Nestor sat with youthful Thrasymed.
To each a portion of the feast he bore,
And held a golden goblet foaming o'er;
Then first approaching to the elder guest,
The latent goddess in these words address'd:
'Whoe'er thou art, whom fortune brings to keep
These rites of Neptune, monarch of the deep,

Thee first it fits, O stranger! to prepare
The due libation and the solemn pray'r;
Then give thy friend to shed the sacred wine:
Though much thy younger, and his years like mine,
He too, I deem, implores the powers divine:
For all mankind alike require their grace,
All born to want; a miserable race!'
He spake, and to her hand preferr'd the bowl:
A secret pleasure touch'd Athena's soul,
To see the preference due to sacred age
Regarded ever by the just and sage.
Of ocean's king she then implores the grace.
'O thou! whose arms this ample globe embrace,
Fulfil our wish, and let thy glory shine
On Nestor first, and Nestor's royal line;
Next grant the Pylian states their just desires,
Pleas'd with their hecatomb's ascending fires;
Last, deign Telemachus and me to bless,
And crown our voyage with desir'd success.'
Thus she; and having paid the rite divine,
Gave to Ulysses' son the rosy wine.
Suppliant he pray'd. And now the victims dress'd
They draw, divide, and celebrate the feast.
The banquet done, the narrative old man,
Thus mild, the pleasing conference began:
'Now, gentle guests! the genial banquet o'er,
It fits to ask ye, what your native shore,
And whence your race? on what adventure, say,
Thus far ye wander through the watery way?
Relate, if business, or the thirst of gain,
Engage your journey o'er the pathless main:
Where savage pirates seek through seas unknown
The lives of others, venturous of their own.'
Urg'd by the precepts by the goddess given,
And fill'd with confidence infus'd from heaven,

The youth, whom Pallas destin'd to be wise
And fam'd among the sons of men, replies:
'Inquir'st thou, father! from what coast we came?
(O grace and glory of the Grecian name!)
From where high Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,
Brown with o'er-arching shades and pendent woods,
Us to these shores our filial duty draws,
A private sorrow, not a public cause.
My sire I seek, where'er the voice of fame
Has told the glories of his noble name,
The great Ulysses; fam'd from shore to shore
For valour much, for hardy suffering more.
Long time with thee before proud Ilion's wall
In arms he fought; with thee beheld her fall.
Of all the chiefs, this hero's fate alone
Has Jove reserv'd, unheard of, and unknown;
Whether in fields by hostile fury slain,
Or sunk by tempests in the gulfy main?
Of this to learn, oppress'd with tender fears,
Lo, at thy knee his suppliant son appears.
If or thy certain eye, or curious ear,
Have learnt his fate, the whole dark story clear:
And oh! whate'er heaven destin'd to betide,
Let neither flattery smooth, nor pity hide.
Prepar'd I stand: he was but born to try
The lot of man; to suffer, and to die.
O then, if ever through the ten years' war
The wise, the good Ulysses claim'd thy care;
If e'er he join'd thy council, or thy sword,
True in his deed, and constant to his word;
Far as thy mind through backward time can see,
Search all thy stores of faithful memory:
'Tis sacred truth I ask, and ask of thee.'

To him experienc'd Nestor thus rejoin'd:
'O friend! what sorrows dost thou bring to mind!

Shall I the long, laborious, scene review,
And open all the wounds of Greece anew?
What toils by sea! where dark in quest of prey
Dauntless we rov'd; Achilles led the way:
What toils by land! where mixt in fatal fight
Such numbers fell, such heroes sunk to night;
There Ajax great, Achilles there the brave,
There wise Patroclus, fill an early grave:
There too my son—ah! once my best delight,
Once swift of foot, and terrible in fight,
In whom stern courage with soft virtue join'd,
A faultless body, and a blameless mind:
Antilochus—what more can I relate?
How trace the tedious series of our fate?
Not added years on years my task could close,
The long historian of my country's woes:
Back to thy native islands might'st thou sail,
And leave half-heard the melancholy tale.
Nine painful years on that detested shore,
What stratagems we form'd, what toils we bore!
Still labouring on, till scarce at last we found
Great Jove propitious, and our conquest crown'd.
Far o'er the rest thy mighty father shin'd,
In wit, in prudence, and in force of mind.
Art thou the son of that illustrious sire?
With joy I grasp thee, and with love admire.
So like your voices, and your words so wise,
Who finds thee younger must consult his eyes.
Thy sire and I were one; nor varied aught
In public sentence, or in private thought;
Alike to council or the' assembly came,
With equal souls, and sentiments the same.
But when (by wisdom won) proud Ilion burn'd,
And in their ships the conquering Greeks return'd;

'Twas God's high will the victors to divide,
And turn the' event, confounding human pride:
Some he destroy'd, some scatter'd as the dust;
(Not all were prudent, and not all were just)
Then Discord, sent by Pallas from above,
Stern daughter of the great avenger Jove,
The brother-kings inspir'd with fell debate;
Who call'd to council all the' Achaian state,
But call'd untimely (not the sacred rite
Observ'd, nor heedful of the setting light,
Nor herald sworn the session to proclaim):
Sour with debauch, a reeling tribe they came.
To these the cause of meeting they explain,
And Menelaüs moves to cross the main;
Not so the king of men: he will'd to stay;
The sacred rites and hecatombs to pay,
And calm Minerva's wrath. Oh, blind to fate!
The gods not lightly change their love, or hate.
With ireful taunts each other they oppose,
Till in loud tumult all the Greeks arose.
Now different counsels every breast divide,
Each burns with rancour to the adverse side:
The' unquiet night strange projects entertain'd
(So Jove, that urg'd us to our fate, ordain'd).
We with the rising morn our ships unmoor'd,
And brought our captives and our stores aboard;
But half the people with respect obey'd
The king of men, and at his bidding stay'd.
Now on the wings of winds our course we keep,
(For God had smooth'd the waters of the deep)
For Tenedos we spread our eager oars,
There land, and pay due victims to the powers:
To bless our safe return we join in pray'r,
But angry Jove dispers'd our vows in air,

And rais'd new discord. Then (so heaven decreed)
Ulysses first and Nestor disagreed:
Wise as he was, by various counsels sway'd,
He there, though late, to please the monarch, stay'd.
But I, determin'd, stem the foamy floods,
Warn'd of the coming fury of the gods.
With us, Tydides fear'd, and urg'd his haste:
And Menelaüs came, but came the last.
He join'd our vessels in the Lesbian bay,
While yet we doubted of our watery way;
If to the right to urge the pilot's toil,
(The safer road) beside the Psyrian isle;
Or the straight course to rocky Chios plough,
And anchor under Mimas' shaggy brow.
We sought direction of the power divine:
The god propitious gave the guiding sign;
Through the mid seas he bid our navy steer,
And in Eubœa shun the woes we fear.
The whistling winds already wak'd the sky;
Before the whistling winds the vessels fly,
With rapid swiftness cut the liquid way,
And reach Geresthus at the point of day.
There hecatombs of bulls, to Neptune slain,
High-flaming please the monarch of the main.
The fourth day shone, when all their labours o'er
Tydides' vessels touch'd the wish'd-for shore:
But I to Pylos scud before the gales,
The god still breathing on my swelling sails;
Separate from all, I safely landed here;
Their fates or fortunes never reach'd my ear.
Yet what I learn'd, attend; as here I sat,
And ask'd each voyager each hero's fate;
Curious to know, and willing to relate.

'Safe reach'd the Myrmidons their native land,
Beneath Achilles' warlike son's command.
Those, whom the heir of great Apollo's art,
Brave Philoctetes, taught to wing the dart;
And those whom Idomen from Ilion's plain
Had led, securely cross'd the dreadful main.
How Agamemnon touch'd his Argive coast,
And how his life by fraud and force he lost,
And how the murderer paid his forfeit breath;
What lands so distant from that scene of death
But trembling heard the fame? and, heard, admire
How well the son appeas'd his slaughter'd sire!
E'en to the' unhappy, that unjustly bleed,
Heaven gives posterity, to' avenge the deed.
So fell Egysthus; and may'st thou, my friend,
(On whom the virtues of thy sire descend)
Make future times thy equal act adore,
And be what brave Orestes was before!'

The prudent youth replied: 'O thou, the grace
And lasting glory of the Grecian race!
Just was the vengeance, and to latest days
Shall long posterity resound the praise.
Some god this arm with equal prowess bless!
And the proud suitors shall its force confess:
Injurious men! who while my soul is sore
Of fresh affronts, are meditating more.
But heaven denies this honour to my hand,
Nor shall my father repossess the land:
The father's fortune never to return,
And the sad son's to suffer and to mourn!'

Thus he; and Nestor took the word: 'My son,
Is it then true, as distant rumours run,
That crowds of rivals for thy mother's charms
Thy palace fill with insults and alarms?

Say, is the fault, through tame submission, thine?
Or leagued against thee, do thy people join,
Mov'd by some oracle, or voice divine?
And yet who knows, but ripening lies in fate
An hour of vengeance for the' afflicted state;
When great Ulysses shall suppress these harms,
Ulysses singly, or all Greece in arms?
But if Athena, war's triumphant maid,
The happy son will, as the father, aid,
(Whose fame and safety was her constant care,
In every danger and in every war:
Never on man did heavenly favour shine
With rays so strong, distinguish'd, and divine,
As those with which Minerva mark'd thy sire)
So might she love thee, so thy soul inspire!
Soon should their hopes in humble dust be laid,
And long oblivion of the bridal bed.'

'Ah! no such hope (the prince with sighs replies)
Can touch my breast; that blessing heaven denies:
E'en by celestial favour were it given,
Fortune or fate would cross the will of heaven.'

'What words are these, and what imprudence thine?
(Thus interpos'd the martial maid divine)
Forgetful youth! but know, the power above
With ease can save each object of his love;
Wide as his will, extends his boundless grace;
Nor lost in time, nor circumscrib'd by place.
Happier his lot, who, many sorrows past,
Long labouring gains his natal shore at last;
Than who, too speedy, hastes to end his life
By some stern ruffian, or adulterous wife.
Death only is the lot which none can miss,
And all is possible to heaven, but this.

The best, the dearest favourite of the sky
Must taste that cup, for man is born to die.'
Thus check'd, replied Ulysses' prudent heir:
'Mentor, no more—the mournful thought forbear;
For he no more must draw his country's breath,
Already snatch'd by fate, and the black doom of death!
Pass we to other subjects; and engage
On themes remote the venerable sage:
(Who thrice has seen the perishable kind
Of men decay, and through three ages shin'd,
Like gods majestic, and like gods in mind)
For much he knows, and just conclusions draws
From various precedents, and various laws.
O son of Neleus! awful Nestor, tell
How he, the mighty Agamemnon, fell;
By what strange fraud Egysthus wrought, relate,
(By force he could not) such a hero's fate.
Liv'd Menelaüs not in Greece? or where
Was then the martial brother's pious care?
Condemn'd perhaps some foreign shore to tread;
Or sure Egysthus had not dar'd the deed.'
To whom the full of days: 'Illustrious youth,
Attend (though partly thou hast guess'd) the truth:
For had the martial Menelaüs found
The ruffian breathing yet on Argive ground;
Nor earth had hid his carcase from the skies,
Nor Grecian virgins shriek'd his obsequies,
But fowls obscene dismember'd his remains,
And dogs had torn him on the naked plains.
While us the works of bloody Mars employ'd,
The wanton youth inglorious peace enjoy'd;
He, stretch'd at ease in Argos' calm recess,
(Whose stately steeds luxuriant pastures bless)

With flattery's insinuating art
Sooth'd the frail queen, and poison'd all her heart.
At first with worthy shame and decent pride
The royal dame his lawless suit denied.
For virtue's image yet possess'd her mind,
Taught by a master of the tuneful kind:
Atrides, parting for the Trojan war,
Consign'd the youthful consort to his care.
True to his charge, the bard preserv'd her long
In honour's limits; such the power of song.
But when the gods these objects of their hate
Dragg'd to destruction, by the links of fate;
The bard they banish'd from his native soil,
And left all helpless in a desert isle:
There he, the sweetest of the sacred train,
Sung dying to the rocks, but sung in vain.
Then virtue was no more; her guard away,
She fell, to lust a voluntary prey.
E'en to the temple stalk'd the adulterous spouse,
With impious thanks, and mockery of vows,
With images, with garments, and with gold;
And odorous fumes from loaded altars roll'd.
'Meantime from flaming Troy we cut the way,
With Menelaüs, through the curling sea.
But when to Sunium's sacred point we came,
Crown'd with the temple of the Athenian dame;
Atrides' pilot, Phrontes, there expir'd;
(Phrontes, of all the sons of men admir'd
To steer the bounding bark with steady toil,
When the storm thickens, and the billows boil)
While yet he exercis'd the steerman's art,
Apollo touch'd him with his gentle dart;
E'en with the rudder in his hand he fell.
To pay whose honours to the shades of hell,

We check'd our haste, by pious office bound,
And laid our old companion in the ground.
And now the rites discharg'd, our course we keep
Far on the gloomy bosom of the deep:
Soon as Malsea's misty tops arise,
Sudden the thunderer blackens all the skies,
And the winds whistle, and the surges roll
Mountains on mountains, and obscure the pole.
The tempest scatters, and divides our fleet;
Part, the storm urges on the coast of Crete,
Where, winding round the rich Cydonian plain,
The streams of Jardan issue to the main.
There stands a rock, high, eminent, and steep,
Whose shaggy brow o'erhangs the shady deep,
And views Gortyna on the western side;
On this rough Auster drove the impetuous tide:
With broken force the billows roll'd away,
And heav'd the fleet into the neighbouring bay;
Thus sav'd from death, they gain'd the Phæstan shores,
With shatter'd vessels, and disabled oars:
But five tall barks the winds and waters toss'd,
Far from their fellows, on the Egyptian coast.
There wander'd Menelaüs through foreign shores,
Amassing gold, and gathering naval stores;
While curs'd Egysthus the detested deed
By fraud fulfill'd, and his great brother bled.
Seven years the traitor rich Mycenæ sway'd,
And his stern rule the groaning land obey'd;
The eighth, from Athens to his realm restor'd,
Orestes brandish'd the revenging sword,
Slew the dire pair, and gave to funeral flame
The vile assassin and adulterous dame.
That day, ere yet the bloody triumphs cease,
Return'd Atrides to the coast of Greece,

And safe to Argos' port his navy brought,
With gifts of price, and ponderous treasure fraught.
Hence warn'd, my son, beware! nor idly stand
Too long a stranger to thy native land;
Lest heedless absence wear thy wealth away,
While lawless feasters in thy palace sway;
Perhaps may seize thy realm, and share the spoil;
And thou return, with disappointed toil,
From thy vain journey, to a rifled isle.
Howe'er, my friend, indulge one labour more,
And seek Atrides on the Spartan shore.
He, wandering long, a wider circle made,
And many-languag'd nations has survey'd;
And measur'd tracts unknown to other ships,
Amid the monstrous wonders of the deeps:
(A length of ocean and unbounded sky,
Which scarce the sea-fowl in a year o'erfly)
Go then; to Sparta take the watery way,
Thy ship and sailors but for orders stay;
Or if by land thou choose thy course to bend,
My steeds, my chariots, and my sons attend:
Thee to Atrides they shall safe convey,
Guides of thy road, companions of thy way.
Urge him with truth to frame his free replies;
And sure he will; for Menelaüs is wise.'

Thus while he speaks, the ruddy sun descends,
And twilight grey her evening shade extends.
Then thus the blue-ey'd maid: 'O full of days!
Wise are thy words, and just are all thy ways.
Now immolate the tongues, and mix the wine,
Sacred to Neptune and the powers divine.
The lamp of day is quench'd beneath the deep,
And soft approach the balmy hours of sleep;

Nor fits it to prolong the heavenly feast,
Timeless, indecent, but retire to rest.'
So spake Jove's daughter, the celestial maid,
The sober train attended and obey'd.
The sacred heralds on their hands around
Pour'd the full urns; the youths the goblets crown'd:
From bowl to bowl the holy beverage flows;
While to the final sacrifice they rose.
The tongues they cast upon the fragrant flame,
And pour, above, the consecrated stream.
And now, their thirst by copious draughts allay'd,
The youthful hero and the Athenian maid
Propose departure from the finish'd rite,
And in their hollow bark to pass the night:
But this the hospitable sage denied:
'Forbid it, Jove! and all the gods! (he cried)
Thus from my walls the much-lov'd son to send
Of such a hero, and of such a friend!
Me, as some needy peasant, would ye leave,
Whom heaven denies the blessing to relieve?
Me would you leave, who boast imperial sway,
When beds of royal state invite your stay?
No—long as life this mortal shall inspire,
Or as my children imitate their sire,
Here shall the wandering stranger find his home,
And hospitable rites adorn the dome.'
'Well hast thou spoke (the blue-ey'd maid replies),
Belov'd old man! benevolent, as wise.
Be the kind dictates of thy heart obey'd,
And let thy words Telemachus persuade:
He to thy palace shall thy steps pursue;
I to the ship, to give the orders due,
Prescribe directions, and confirm the crew:

For I alone sustain their naval cares,
Who boast experience from these silver hairs;
All youths the rest, whom to this journey move
Like years, like tempers, and their prince's love.
There in the vessel I shall pass the night:
And soon as morning paints the fields of light,
I go to challenge from the Caucons bold
A debt, contracted in the days of old.
But this thy guest, receiv'd with friendly care,
Let thy strong coursers swift to Sparta bear;
Prepare thy chariot at the dawn of day,
And be thy son companion of his way.'
Then turning with the word, Minerva flies,
And soars an eagle through the liquid skies:
Vision divine! the throng'd spectators gaze
In holy wonder fix'd, and still amaze.
But chief the reverend sage admir'd; he took
The hand of young Telemachus, and spoke:
'O happy youth! and favour'd of the skies,
Distinguish'd care of guardian deities!
Whose early years for future worth engage,
No vulgar manhood, no ignoble age.
For lo! none other of the court above
Than she, the daughter of almighty Jove,
Pallas herself, the war-triumphant maid,
Confess'd is thine, as once thy father's aid.
So guide me, goddess! so propitious shine
On me, my consort, and my royal line!
A yearling bullock to thy name shall smoke,
Untam'd, unconscious of the galling yoke,
With ample forehead, and yet tender horns,
Whose budding honours ductile gold adorns.'
Submissive thus the hoary sire preferr'd
His holy vow: the favouring goddess heard.

Then slowly rising, o'er the sandy space
Precedes the father, follow'd by his race,
(A long procession) timely marching home
In comely order to the regal dome.
There when arrived, on thrones around him plac'd,
His sons and grandsons the wide circle grac'd.
To these the hospitable sage, in sign
Of social welcome, mix'd the racy wine
(Late from the mellowing cask restor'd to light,
By ten long years refin'd, and rosy-bright).
To Pallas high the foaming bowl he crown'd,
And sprinkled large libations on the ground.
Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,
And to the gifts of balmy sleep repairs.
Deep in a rich alcove the prince was laid,
And slept beneath the pompous colonnade;
Fast by his side Pisistratus lay spread,
(In age his equal) on a splendid bed:
But in an inner court, securely clos'd,
The reverend Nestor and his queen repos'd.
When now Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
With rosy lustre purpled o'er the lawn;
The old man early rose, walk'd forth, and sat
On polish'd stone before his palace gate:
With unguents smooth the lucid marble shone,
Where ancient Neleus sat, a rustic throne;
But he descending to the' infernal shade,
Sage Nestor fill'd it, and the sceptre sway'd.
His sons around him mild obeisance pay,
And duteous take the orders of the day.
First Echephron and Stratius quit their bed;
Then Perseus, Aretus, and Thrasymed;
The last Pisistratus arose from rest:
They came, and near him plac'd the stranger-guest.

To these the senior thus declar'd his will:
'My sons! the dictates of your sire fulfil.
To Pallas, first of gods, prepare the feast,
Who grac'd our rites, a more than mortal guest.
Let one, dispatchful, bid some swain to lead
A well-fed bullock from the grassy mead;
One seek the harbour where the vessels moor,
And bring thy friends, Telemachus! ashore;
(Leave only two the galley to attend)
Another to Laerceus must we send,
Artist divine, whose skilful hands infold
The victim's horn with circumfusile gold.
The rest may here the pious duty share,
And bid the handmaids for the feast prepare,
The seats to range, the fragrant wood to bring,
And limpid waters from the living spring.'
He said, and busy each his care bestow'd;
Already at the gates the bullock low'd,
Already came the Ithacensian crew,
The dextrous smith the tools already drew;
His ponderous hammer, and his anvil sound,
And the strong tongs to turn the metal round.
Nor was Minerva absent from the rite,
She view'd her honours, and enjoy'd the sight.
With reverend hand the king presents the gold,
Which round the' intorted horns the gilder roll'd;
So wrought, as Pallas might with pride behold.
Young Aretus from forth his bridal bow'r
Brought the full laver, o'er their hands to pour,
And canisters of consecrated flour.
Stratius and Echephron the victim led;
The axe was held by warlike Thrasymed,
In act to strike: before him Perseus stood,
The vase extending to receive the blood.

The king himself initiates to the pow'r;
Scatters with quivering hand the sacred flour,
And the stream sprinkles: from the curling brows
The hair collected in the fire he throws.
Soon as due vows on every part were paid,
And sacred wheat upon the victim laid,
Strong Thrasymed discharg'd the speeding blow
Full on his neck, and cut the nerves in two.
Down sunk the heavy beast: the females round,
Maids, wives, and matrons, mix a shrilling sound.
Nor scorn'd the queen the holy choir to join
(The first-born she, of old Clymenus' line;
In youth by Nestor lov'd, of spotless fame,
And lov'd in age, Eurydice by name).
From earth they rear him, struggling now with death;
And Nestor's youngest stops the vents of breath.
The soul for ever flies: on all sides round [ground.
Streams the black blood, and smokes upon the
The beast they then divide, and disunite
The ribs and limbs, observant of the rite:
On these, in double cawls involv'd with art,
The choicest morsels lay from every part.
The sacred sage before his altar stands,
Turns the burnt-offering with his holy hands,
And pours the wine, and bids the flames aspire:
The youths with instruments surround the fire.
The thighs now sacrific'd, and entrails dress'd,
The' assistants part, transfix, and boil the rest.
While these officious tend the rites divine,
The last fair branch of the Nestorean line,
Sweet Polycaste, took the pleasing toil
To bathe the prince, and pour the fragrant oil.
O'er his fair limbs a flowery vest he threw,
And issued, like a god, to mortal view.

His former seat beside the king he found,
(His people's father with his peers around)
All plac'd at ease the holy banquet join,
And in the dazzling goblet laughs the wine.
The rage of thirst and hunger now suppress'd,
The monarch turns him to his royal guest;
And for the promis'd journey bids prepare
The smooth-hair'd horses, and the rapid car.
Observant of his word, the word scarce spoke,
The sons obey, and join them to the yoke.
Then bread and wine a ready handmaid brings,
And presents, such as suit the state of kings.
The glittering seat Telemachus ascends:
His faithful guide, Pisistratus attends;
With hasty hand the ruling reins he drew:
He lash'd the coursers, and the coursers flew.
Beneath the bounding yoke alike they held
Their equal pace, and smok'd along the field.
The towers of Pylos sink, its views decay,
Fields after fields fly back, till close of day:
Then sunk the sun, and darken'd all the way.
To Pheræ now, Diocleus' stately seat,
(Of Alpheus' race) the weary youths retreat.
His house affords the hospitable rite,
And pleas'd they sleep (the blessing of the night).
But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
With rosy lustre purpled o'er the lawn;
Again they mount, their journey to renew,
And from the sounding portico they flew.
Along the waving fields their way they hold,
The fields receding as the chariot roll'd:
Then slowly sunk the ruddy globe of light,
And o'er the shaded landscape rush'd the night.

THE

FOURTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE CONFERENCE WITH MENELAUS.

TELEMACHUS, with Pisistratus, arriving at Sparta, is hospitably received by Menelaüs, to whom he relates the cause of his coming, and learns from him many particulars of what befel the Greeks since the destruction of Troy. He dwells more at large upon the prophecies of Proteus to him in his return, from which he acquaints Telemachus, that Ulysses is detained in the island of Calypso.

In the meantime the suitors consult to destroy Telemachus in his voyage home. Penelope is apprised of this, but comforted in a dream by Pallas, in the shape of her sister Iphima.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK IV.

And now proud Sparta with their wheels resounds,
Sparta whose walls a range of hills surrounds:
At the fair dome the rapid labour ends;
Where sat Atrides midst his bridal friends,
With double vows invoking Hymen's pow'r,
To bless his son's and daughter's nuptial hour.
That day, to great Achilles' son resign'd,
Hermione, the fairest of her kind,
Was sent to crown the long-protracted joy,
Espous'd before the fatal doom of Troy:
With steeds and gilded cars, a gorgeous train
Attend the nymph to Phthia's distant reign.
Meanwhile at home, to Megapenthes' bed
The virgin-choir Alector's daughter led.
Brave Megapenthes, from a stol'n amour
To great Atrides' age his handmaid bore:
To Helen's bed the gods alone assign
Hermione, to' extend the regal line;
On whom a radiant pomp of graces wait,
Resembling Venus in attractive state.
While this gay friendly troop the king surround,
With festival and mirth the roofs resound;

A bard amid the joyous circle sings
High airs, attemper'd to the vocal strings;
Whilst, warbling to the varied strain, advance
Two sprightly youths to form the bounding dance.
'Twas then, that issuing through the palace gate
The splendid car roll'd slow in regal state:
On the bright eminence young Nestor shone,
And fast beside him great Ulysses' son.
Grave Eteoneus saw the pomp appear,
And, speeding, thus address'd the royal ear:
'Two youths approach, whose semblant features prove
Their blood devolving from the source of Jove.
Is due reception deign'd, or must they bend
Their doubtful course to seek a distant friend?'
'Insensate! (with a sigh the king replies)
Too long, misjudging, have I thought thee wise:
But sure relentless folly steels thy breast,
Obdurate to reject the stranger-guest;
To those dear hospitable rites a foe,
Which in my wanderings oft relief'd my woe:
Fed by the bounty of another's board,
Till pitying Jove my native realm restor'd—
Straight be the coursers from the car releas'd,
Conduct the youths to grace the genial feast.'
The seneschal, rebuk'd, in haste withdrew;
With equal haste a menial train pursue:
Part led the coursers, from the car enlarg'd,
Each to a crib with choicest grain surcharg'd;
Part in a portico, profusely grac'd
With rich magnificence, the chariot plac'd;
Then to the dome the friendly pair invite,
Who eye the dazzling roofs with vast delight,

Resplendent as the blaze of summer-noon,
Or the pale radiance of the midnight moon.
From room to room their eager view they bend;
Thence to the bath, a beauteous pile, descend;
Where a bright damsel-train attends the guests
With liquid odours, and embroider'd vests.
Refresh'd, they wait them to the bower of state,
Where circled with his peers Atrides sat:
Thron'd next the king, a fair attendant brings
The purest product of the crystal springs;
High on a massy vase of silver mould,
The burnish'd laver flames with solid gold:
In solid gold the purple vintage flows,
And on the board a second banquet rose.
When thus the king with hospitable port:
'Accept this welcome to the Spartan court;
The waste of nature let the feast repair,
Then your high lineage and your names declare:
Say from what sceptred ancestry ye claim,
Recorded eminent in deathless fame?
For vulgar parents cannot stamp their race
With signatures of such majestic grace.'
Ceasing, benevolent he straight assigns
The royal portion of the choicest chines
To each accepted friend: with grateful haste
They share the honours of the rich repast.
Suffic'd, soft whispering thus to Nestor's son,
His head reclin'd, young Ithacus begun:
'View'st thou unmov'd, O ever-honour'd most!
These prodigies of art, and wondrous cost?
Above, beneath, around the palace shines
The sumless treasure of exhausted mines:
The spoils of elephants the roofs inlay,
And studded amber darts a golden ray:

Such, and not nobler, in the realms above
My wonder dictates is the dome of Jove.'
The monarch took the word, and grave replied:
'Presumptuous are the vaunts, and vain the pride
Of man who dares in pomp with Jove contest,
Unchang'd, immortal, and supremely bless'd!
With all my affluence when my woes are weigh'd,
Envy will own, the purchase dearly paid.
For eight slow-circling years by tempest tost,
From Cyprus to the fair Phœnician coast,
(Sidon the capital) I stretch'd my toil
Through regions fatten'd with the flows of Nile.
Next Ethiopia's utmost bound explore,
And the parch'd borders of the Arabian shore:
Then warp my voyage on the southern gales,
O'er the warm Libyan wave to spread my sails;
That happy clime! where each revolving year
The teeming ewes a triple offspring bear,
And two fair crescents of translucent horn
The brows of all their young increase adorn;
The shepherd swains with sure abundance bless'd,
On the fat flock and rural dainties feast;
Nor want of herbage makes the dairy fail,
But every season fills the foaming pail.
Whilst heaping unwish'd wealth, I distant roam,
The best of brothers, at his natal home,
By the dire fury of a traitress wife,
Ends the sad evening of a stormy life:
Whence with incessant grief my soul annoy'd,
These riches are possess'd, but not enjoy'd!
My wars, the copious theme of every tongue,
To you, your fathers have recorded long:
How favouring heaven repaid my glorious toils
With a sack'd palace, and barbaric spoils.

Oh! had the gods so large a boon denied,
And life, the just equivalent, supplied
To those brave warriors, who, with glory fir'd,
Far from their country in my cause expir'd!
Still in short intervals of pleasing woe,
Regardful of the friendly dues I owe,
I to the glorious dead, for ever dear,
Indulge the tribute of a grateful tear.
But oh! Ulysses—deeper than the rest
That sad idea wounds my anxious breast!
My heart bleeds fresh with agonizing pain;
The bowl, and tasteful viands tempt in vain,
Nor sleep's soft power can close my streaming eyes,
When imag'd to my soul his sorrows rise.
No peril in my cause he ceas'd to prove,
His labours equall'd only by my love:
And both alike to bitter fortune born,
For him to suffer, and for me to mourn'
Whether he wanders on some friendly coast,
Or glides in Stygian gloom a pensive ghost,
No fame reveals; but doubtful of his doom,
His good old sire with sorrow to the tomb
Declines his trembling steps; untimely care
Withers the blooming vigour of his heir;
And the chaste partner of his bed and throne
Wastes all her widow'd hours in tender moan.'

While thus pathetic to the prince he spoke,
From the brave youth the streaming passion broke:
Studious to veil the grief, in vain repress'd,
His face he shrouded with his purple vest.
The conscious monarch pierc'd the coy disguise,
And view'd his filial love with vast surprise:
Dubious to press the tender theme, or wait
To hear the youth inquire his father's fate.

In this suspense bright Helen grac'd the room;
Before her breath'd a gale of rich perfume:
So moves, adorn'd with each attractive grace,
The silver-shafted goddess of the chace!
The seat of majesty Adraste brings,
With art illustrious, for the pomp of kings.
To spread the pall (beneath the regal chair)
Of softest woof, is bright Alcippe's care.
A silver canister divinely wrought,
In her soft hands the beauteous Phylo brought:
To Sparta's queen of old the radiant vase
Alcandra gave, a pledge of royal grace:
For Polybus her lord (whose sovereign sway
The wealthy tribes of Pharian Thebes obey),
When to that court Atrides came, caress'd
With vast munificence the' imperial guest;
Two lavers from the richest ore refin'd,
With silver tripods, the kind host assign'd:
And, bounteous, from the royal treasure told
Ten equal talents of refulgent gold.
Alcandra, consort of his high command,
A golden distaff gave to Helen's hand;
And that rich vase, with living sculpture wrought,
Which heap'd with wool the beauteous Phylo brought:
The silken fleece impurpled for the loom,
Rival'd the hyacinth in vernal bloom.
The sovereign seat then Jove-born Helen press'd,
And pleasing thus her sceptred lord address'd:
'Who grace our palace now, that friendly pair,
Speak they their lineage, or their names declare?
Uncertain of the truth, yet uncontroll'd
Hear me the bodings of my breast unfold.
With wonder wrapt, on yonder cheek I trace
The feature of the Ulyssean race:

Diffus'd o'er each resembling line appear,
In just similitude, the grace and air
Of young Telemachus, the lovely boy,
Who bless'd Ulysses with a father's joy,
What time the Greeks combin'd their social arms,
To avenge the stain of my ill-fated charms!
'Just is thy thought, (the king assenting cries)
Methinks Ulysses strikes my wondering eyes:
Full shines the father in the filial frame,
His port, his features, and his shape the same:
Such quick regards his sparkling eyes bestow;
Such wavy ringlets o'er his shoulders flow!
And when he heard the long disastrous store
Of cares, which in my cause Ulysses bore,
Dismay'd, heart-wounded with paternal woes,
Above restraint the tide of sorrow rose:
Cautious to let the gushing grief appear,
His purple garment veil'd the falling tear.'
'See there confess'd, (Pisistratus replies)
The genuine worth of Ithacus the wise!
Of that heroic sire the youth is sprung,
But modest awe hath chain'd his timorous tongue.
Thy voice, O king! with pleas'd attention heard,
Is like the dictates of a god rever'd.
With him at Nestor's high command I came,
Whose age I honour with a parent's name.
By adverse destiny constrain'd to sue
For counsel and redress, he sues to you.
Whatever ill the friendless orphan bears,
Bereav'd of parents in his infant years,
Still must the wrong'd Telemachus sustain,
If hopeful of your aid, he hopes in vain:
Affianc'd in your friendly power alone,
The youth would vindicate the vacant throne.'

'Is Sparta bless'd, and these desiring eyes
View my friend's son? (the king exulting cries)
Son of my friend, by glorious toils approv'd,
Whose sword was sacred to the man he lov'd:
Mirror of constant faith, rever'd, and mourn'd!—
When Troy was ruin'd, had the chief return'd,
No Greek an equal space had e'er possess'd,
Of dear affection, in my grateful breast.
I, to confirm the mutual joys we shar'd,
For his abode a capital prepar'd;
Argos the seat of sovereign rule I chose;
Fair in the plan the future palace rose,
Where my Ulysses and his race might reign,
And portion to his tribes the wide domain.
To them my vassals had resign'd a soil,
With teeming plenty to reward their toil.
There with commutual zeal we both had strove
In acts of dear benevolence and love:
Brothers in peace, not rivals in command,
And death alone dissolv'd the friendly band!
Some envious power the blissful scene destroys;
Vanish'd are all the visionary joys:
The soul of friendship to my hope is lost,
Fated to wander from his natal coast!'
He cease'd; a gust of grief began to rise:
Fast streams a tide from beauteous Helen's eyes;
Fast for the sire the filial sorrows flow;
The weeping monarch swells the mighty woe:
Thy cheeks, Pisistratus, the tears bedew,
While pictur'd to thy mind appear'd in view
Thy martial brother [1], on the Phrygian plain
Extended pale, by swarthy Memnon slain!
But silence soon the son of Nestor broke,
And melting with fraternal pity spoke:

[1] Antilochus.

'Frequent, O king, was Nestor wont to raise
And charm attention with thy copious praise:
To crown thy various gifts, the sage assign'd
The glory of a firm capacious mind:
With that superior attribute control
This unavailing impotence of soul.
Let not your roof with echoing grief resound,
Now for the feast the friendly bowl is crown'd:
But when from dewy shade emerging bright
Aurora streaks the sky with orient light,
Let each deplore his dead: the rites of woe
Are all, alas! the living can bestow:
O'er the congenial dust enjoin'd to shear
The graceful curl, and drop the tender tear.
Then mingling in the mournful pomp with you,
I'll pay my brother's ghost a warrior's due,
And mourn the brave Antilochus, a name
Not unrecorded in the rolls of fame;
With strength and speed superior form'd, in fight
To face the foe, or intercept his flight:
Too early snatch'd by fate ere known to me!
I boast a witness of his worth in thee.'

'Young and mature! the monarch thus rejoins,
In thee renew'd the soul of Nestor shines:
Form'd by the care of that consummate sage,
In early bloom an oracle of age.
Whene'er his influence Jove vouchsafes to show'r
To bless the natal, and the nuptial hour;
From the great sire transmissive to the race,
The boon devolving gives distinguish'd grace.
Such, happy Nestor! was thy glorious doom:
Around thee full of years, thy offspring bloom,
Expert of arms, and prudent in debate;
The gifts of heaven to guard thy hoary state.

But now let each becalm his troubled breast,
Wash, and partake serene the friendly feast.
To move thy suit, Telemachus, delay,
Till heaven's revolving lamp restores the day.'
He said. Asphalion swift the laver brings:
Alternate all partake the grateful springs:
Then from the rites of purity repair,
And with keen gust the savoury viands share.
Meantime with genial joy to warm the soul,
Bright Helen mix'd a mirth-inspiring bowl;
Temper'd with drugs of sovereign use, to' assuage
The boiling bosom of tumultuous rage;
To clear the cloudy front of wrinkled care,
And dry the tearful sluices of despair:
Charm'd with that virtuous draught, the' exalted mind
All sense of woe delivers to the wind:
Though on the blazing pile his parent lay,
Or a lov'd brother groan'd his life away,
Or darling son, oppress'd by ruffian-force,
Fell breathless at his feet a mangled corse;
From morn to eve, impassive and serene,
The man entranc'd would view the deathful scene.
These drugs, so friendly to the joys of life,
Bright Helen learn'd from Thone's imperial wife;
Who sway'd the sceptre where prolific Nile
With various simples clothes the fatten'd soil.
With wholesome herbage mix'd, the direful bane
Of vegetable venom taints the plain;
From Pæon sprung, their patron-god imparts
To all the Pharian race his healing arts.
The beverage now prepar'd to inspire the feast,
The circle thus the beauteous queen address'd:
'Thron'd in omnipotence, supremest Jove
Tempers the fates of human race above;

By the firm sanction of his sovereign will,
Alternate are decreed our good and ill.
To feastful mirth be this white hour assign'd,
And sweet discourse, the banquet of the mind.
Myself assisting in the social joy,
Will tell Ulysses' bold exploit in Troy:
Sole witness of the deed I now declare;
Speak you (who saw) his wonders in the war.
'Seam'd o'er with wounds, which his own sabre gave,
In the vile habit of a village slave,
The foe deceiv'd, he pass'd the tented plain,
In Troy to mingle with the hostile train.
In this attire secure from searching eyes,
Till haply piercing through the dark disguise
The chief I challeng'd; he, whose practis'd wit
Knew all the serpent-mazes of deceit,
Eludes my search: but when his form I view'd
Fresh from the bath with fragrant oils renew'd,
His limbs in military purple dress'd;
Each brightening grace the genuine Greek confess'd.
A previous pledge of sacred faith obtain'd,
Till he the lines and Argive fleet regain'd,
To keep his stay conceal'd; the chief declar'd
The plans of war against the town prepar'd.
Exploring then the secrets of the state,
He learn'd what best might urge the Dardan fate:
And, safe returning to the Grecian host,
Sent many a shade to Pluto's dreary coast.
Loud grief resounded through the towers of Troy,
But my pleas'd bosom glow'd with secret joy:
For then with dire remorse, and conscious shame,
I view'd the' effects of that disastrous flame,
Which, kindled by the' imperious queen of love,
Constrain'd me from my native realm to rove:

And oft in bitterness of soul deplor'd
My absent daughter, and my dearer lord;
Admir'd among the first of human race,
For every gift of mind and manly grace.'
Right well, (replied the king) your speech displays
The matchless merit of the chief you praise:
Heroes in various climes myself have found,
For martial deeds, and depth of thought renown'd;
But Ithacus, unrivall'd in his claim,
May boast a title to the loudest fame:
In battle calm, he guides the rapid storm,
Wise to resolve, and patient to perform.
What wondrous conduct in the chief appear'd,
When the vast fabric of the steed we rear'd!
Some dæmon, anxious for the Trojan doom,
Urg'd you with great Deiphobus to come,
To' explore the fraud; with guile oppos'd to guile,
Slow-pacing thrice around the' insidious pile,
Each noted leader's name you thrice invoke,
Your accent varying as their spouses spoke:
The pleasing sounds each latent warrior warm'd,
But most Tydides' and my heart alarm'd:
To quit the steed we both impatient press,
Threatening to answer from the dark recess.
Unmov'd the mind of Ithacus remain'd,
And the vain ardours of our love restrain'd:
But Anticlus, unable to control,
Spoke loud the language of his yearning soul:
Ulysses straight with indignation fir'd,
(For so the common care of Greece requir'd)
Firm to his lips his forceful hands applied,
Till on his tongue the flutt'ring murmurs died.
Meantime Minerva from the fraudful horse
Back to the court of Priam bent your course.'

'Inclement fate! (Telemachus replies)
Frail is the boasted attribute of wise:
The leader, mingling with the vulgar host,
Is in the common mass of matter lost!
But now let sleep the painful waste repair
Of sad reflection, and corroding care.
He ceas'd; the menial fair that round her wait,
At Helen's beck prepare the room of state;
Beneath an ample portico, they spread
The downy fleece to form the slumbrous bed,
And o'er soft palls of purple grain unfold
Rich tapestry, stiff with inwoven gold:
Then through the' illumin'd dome, to balmy rest
The' obsequious herald guides each princely guest:
While to his regal bower the king ascends,
And beauteous Helen on her lord attends.
Soon as the morn, in orient purple dress'd,
Unbar'd the portal of the roseate east,
The monarch rose; magnificent to view,
The imperial mantle o'er his vest he threw;
The glittering zone athwart his shoulder cast,
A starry falchion low-depending grac'd;
Clasp'd on his feet the' embroider'd sandals shine;
And forth he moves, majestic and divine.
Instant to young Telemachus he press'd,
And thus benevolent his speech address'd:
'Say, royal youth, sincere of soul, report
What cause hath led you to the Spartan court?
Do public or domestic cares constrain
This toilsome voyage o'er the surgy main?'
'O highly favour'd delegate of Jove!
(Replies the prince) inflam'd with filial love,
And anxious hope, to hear my parent's doom,
A suppliant to your royal court I come.

Our sovereign seat a lewd usurping race
With lawless riot and misrule disgrace;
To pamper'd insolence devoted fall
Prime of the flock, and choicest of the stall:
For wild ambition wings their bold desire,
And all to mount the' imperial bed aspire.
But prostrate I implore, O king! relate
The mournful series of my father's fate!
Each known disaster of the man disclose,
Born by his mother to a world of woes!
Recite them! nor in erring pity fear
To wound with storied grief the filial ear:
If e'er Ulysses, to reclaim your right,
Avow'd his zeal in council or in fight,
If Phrygian camps the friendly toils attest,
To the sire's merit give the son's request.'
Deep from his inmost soul Atrides sigh'd,
And thus indignant to the prince replied:
'Heavens! would a soft, inglorious, dastard train
An absent hero's nuptial joys profane!
So with her young, amid the woodland shades,
A timorous hind the lion's court invades,
Leaves in the fatal lair the tender fawns,
Climbs the green cliff, or feeds the flowery lawns:
Meantime return'd, with dire remorseless sway
The monarch-savage rends the trembling prey.
With equal fury, and with equal fame,
Ulysses soon shall reassert his claim.
O Jove, supreme, whom gods and men revere!
And thou, to whom 'tis given to gild the sphere!
With power congenial join'd, propitious aid
The chief adopted by the martial maid!
Such to our wish the warrior soon restore,
As when contending on the Lesbian shore

His prowess Philomelides confess'd,
And loud-acclaiming Greeks the victor bless'd;
Then soon the' invaders of his bed and throne,
Their love presumptuous shall with life atone.
With patient ear, O royal youth, attend
The storied labours of thy father's friend:
Fruitful of deeds, the copious tale is long,
But truth severe shall dictate to my tongue:
Learn what I heard the sea-born seer relate,
Whose eye can pierce the dark recess of fate.

'Long on the' Egyptian coast by calms confin'd,
Heaven to my fleet refus'd a prosperous wind:
No vows had we preferr'd, nor victim slain!
For this the gods each favouring gale restrain:
Jealous, to see their high behests obey'd;
Severe, if men the' eternal rites evade.
High o'er a gulfy sea, the Pharian isle
Fronts the deep roar of disemboguing Nile:
Her distance from the shore, the course begun
At dawn, and ending with the setting sun,
A galley measures; when the stiffer gales
Rise on the poop, and fully stretch the sails.
There, anchor'd vessels safe in harbour lie,
While limpid springs the failing cask supply.'

'And now the twentieth sun, descending, laves
His glowing axle in the western waves;
Still with expanded sails we court in vain
Propitious winds to waft us o'er the main:
And the pale mariner at once deplores
His drooping vigour, and exhausted stores
When lo! a bright cœrulean form appears,
The fair Eidothea! to dispel my fears;
Proteus her sire divine. With pity press'd,
Me sole the daughter of the deep address'd;

What time, with hunger pin'd, my absent mates
Roam the wild isle in search of rural cates,
Bait the barb'd steel, and from the fishy flood
Appease the' afflictive fierce desire of food.
'Whoe'er thou art (the azure goddess cries)
Thy conduct ill deserves the praise of wise:
Is death thy choice, or misery thy boast,
That here inglorious on a barren coast
Thy brave associates droop, a meagre train,
With famine pale, and ask thy care in vain?
'Struck with the kind reproach, I straight reply:
Whate'er thy title in thy native sky,
A goddess sure! for more than mortal grace
Speaks thee descendant of ethereal race:
Deem not, that here of choice my fleet remains;
Some heavenly power averse my stay constrains:
O, piteous of my fate, vouchsafe to shew
(For what's sequester'd from celestial view?)
What power becalms the' innavigable seas?
What guilt provokes him, and what vows appease?'
'I cease'd; when affable the goddess cried:
Observe, and in the truths I speak confide:
The orac'lous seer frequents the Pharian coast,
From whose high bed my birth divine I boast;
Proteus, a name tremendous o'er the main,
The delegate of Neptune's watery reign.
Watch with insidious care his known abode;
There fast in chains constrain the various god:
Who bound, obedient to superior force,
Unerring will prescribe your destin'd course.
If studious of your realms, you then demand
Their state, since last you left your natal land;
Instant the god obsequious will disclose
Bright tracts of glory, or a cloud of woes.'

'She ceas'd, and suppliant thus I made reply:
O goddess! on thy aid my hopes rely;
Dictate, propitious, to my duteous ear
What arts can captivate the changeful seer:
For perilous the' essay, unheard the toil,
To elude the prescience of a god by guile.
'Thus to the goddess mild my suit I end.
Then she: "Obedient to my rule, attend:
When through the zone of heaven the mounted sun
Hath journey'd half, and half remains to run;
The seer, while zephyrs curl the swelling deep,
Basks on the breezy shore, in grateful sleep,
His oozy limbs. Emerging from the wave,
The Phocæ swift surround his rocky cave,
Frequent and full; the consecrated train
Of her [1], whose azure trident awes the main:
There wallowing warm, the' enormous herd exhaleth
An oily steam, and taints the noon-tide gales.
To that recess, commodious for surprise,
When purple light shall next suffuse the skies,
With me repair; and from thy warrior band
Three chosen chiefs of dauntless soul command:
Let their auxiliar force befriend the toil,
For strong the god, and perfected in guile.
Stretch'd on the shelly shore, he first surveys
The flouncing herd ascending from the seas;
Their number summ'd, repos'd in sleep profound
The scaly charge their guardian god surround:
So with his battening flocks the careful swain
Abides, pavilion'd on the grassy plain.
With powers united, obstinately bold,
Invade him, couch'd amid the scaly fold.
Instant he wears, elusive of the rape,
The mimic force of every savage shape:

[1] Amphitrite.

Or glides with liquid lapse a murmuring stream,
Or wrapt in flame, he glows at every limb.
Yet still retentive, with redoubled might
Through each vain passive form constrain his flight.
But when, his native shape resum'd, he stands
Patient of conquest, and your cause demands;
The cause that urg'd the bold attempt declare,
And soothe the vanquish'd with a victor's pray'r.
The bands relax'd, implore the seer to say
What godhead interdicts the watry way?
Who straight propitious, in prophetic strain
Will teach you to repass the' unmeasur'd main."
She ceas'd, and bounding from the shelfy shore,
Round the descending nymph the waves redounding roar.

'High wrapt in wonder of the future deed,
With joy impetuous to the port I speed:
The wants of nature with repast suffice,
Till night with grateful shade involv'd the skies,
And shed ambrosial dews. Fast by the deep,
Along the tented shore, in balmy sleep,
Our cares were lost. When o'er the eastern lawn,
In saffron robes the daughter of the dawn
Advanc'd her rosy steps; before the bay,
Due ritual honours to the gods I pay;
Then seek the place the sea-born nymph assign'd,
With three associates of undaunted mind.
Arriv'd, to form along the' appointed strand
For each a bed, she scoops the hilly sand;
Then from her azure car the finny spoils
Of four vast Phocæ takes, to veil her wiles:
Beneath the finny spoils extended prone,
Hard toil! the prophet's piercing eye to shun;
New from the corse, the scaly frands diffuse
Unsavoury stench of oil, and brackish ooze:

But the bright sea-maid's gentle power implor'd,
With nectar'd drops the sickening sense restor'd.
'Thus till the sun had travell'd half the skies
Ambush'd we lie, and wait the bold emprise:
When thronging quick to bask in open air,
The flocks of ocean to the strand repair;
Couch'd on the sunny sand, the monsters sleep:
Then Proteus, mounting from the hoary deep,
Surveys his charge, unknowing of deceit:
(In order told, we make the sum complete)
Pleas'd with the false review, secure he lies,
And leaden slumbers press his drooping eyes.
Rushing impetuous forth, we straight prepare
A furious onset with the sound of war,
And shouting seize the god: our force to evade
His various arts he soon resumes in aid:
A lion now, he curls a surgy mane;
Sudden, our hands a spotted pard restrain;
Then arm'd with tusks, and lightning in his eyes,
A boar's obscener shape the god belies:
On spiry volumes, there a dragon rides;
Here, from our strict embrace a stream he glides:
And last, sublime his stately growth he rears,
A tree, and well-dissembled foliage wears.
Vain efforts! with superior power compress'd,
Me with reluctance thus the seer address'd:
'Say, son of Atreus, say what god inspir'd
This daring fraud, and what the boon desir'd?'
I thus:—'O thou, whose certain eye foresees
The fix'd event of fate's remote decrees;
After long woes, and various toil endur'd,
Still on this desert isle my fleet is moor'd;
Unfriended of the gales. All-knowing! say,
What godhead interdicts the watry way?

What vows repentant will the power appease,
To speed a prosperous voyage o'er the seas?
'To Jove (with stern regard the god replies)
And all the' offended synod of the skies,
Just hecatombs with due devotion slain,
Thy guilt absolv'd, a prosperous voyage gain.
To the firm sanction of thy fate attend!
An exile thou, nor cheering face of friend,
Nor sight of natal shore, nor regal dome
Shalt yet enjoy, but still art doom'd to roam.
Once more the Nile, who from the secret source
Of Jove's high seat descends with sweepy force,
Must view his billows white beneath thy oar,
And altars blaze along his sanguine shore.
Then will the gods, with holy pomp ador'd,
To thy long vows a safe return accord.'
'He cease'd: heart-wounded with afflictive pain,
(Doom'd to repeat the perils of the main,
A shelfy tract, and long!) 'O seer, I cry,
To the stern sanction of the' offended sky
My prompt obedience bows. But deign to say,
What fate propitious, or what dire dismay
Sustain those peers, the relics of our host,
Whom I with Nestor on the Phrygian coast
Embracing left? Must I the warriors weep,
Whelm'd in the bottom of the monstrous deep?
Or did the kind domestic friend deplore
The breathless heroes on their native shore?'
'Press not too far, (replied the god) but cease
To know, what known will violate thy peace:
Too curious of their doom! with friendly woe
Thy breast will heave, and tears eternal flow.
Part live! the rest, a lamentable train!
Range the dark bounds of Pluto's dreary reign.

Two, foremost in the roll of Mars renown'd,
Whose arms with conquest in thy cause were crown'd,
Fell by disastrous fate: by tempests tost,
A third lives wretched on a distant coast.
'By Neptune rescued from Minerva's hate,
On Gyrae, safe Oïlean Ajax sat,
His ship o'erwhelm'd: but frowning on the floods,
Impious he roar'd defiance to the gods;
To his own prowess all the glory gave,
The power defrauding who vouchsaf'd to save.
This heard the raging ruler of the main;
His spear, indignant for such high disdain,
He launch'd; dividing with his forky mace
The' aërial summit from the marble base:
The rock rush'd sea-ward with impetuous roar
Ingulf'd, and to the' abyss the boaster bore.
'By Juno's guardian aid, the watry vast,
Secure of storms, your royal brother past;
Till coasting nigh the cape, where Malea shrouds
Her spiry cliffs amid surrounding clouds,
A whirling gust tumultuous from the shore,
Across the deep his labouring vessel bore.
In an ill-fated hour the coast he gain'd,
Where late in regal pomp Thyestes reign'd;
But when his hoary honours bow'd to fate,
Egysthus govern'd in paternal state.
The surges now subside, the tempest ends;
From his tall ship the king of men descends;
There fondly thinks the gods conclude his toil:
Far from his own domain salutes the soil:
With rapture oft the verge of Greece reviews,
And the dear turf with tears of joy bedews.
Him thus exulting on the distant strand,
A spy distinguish'd from his airy stand;

To bribe whose vigilance, Egysthus told
A mighty sum of ill persuading gold:
There watch'd this guardian of his guilty fear,
Till the twelfth moon had wheel'd her pale career;
And now admonish'd by his eye, to court
With terror wing'd conveys the dread report.
Of deathful arts expert, his lord employs
The ministers of blood in dark surprise;
And twenty youths in radiant mail incas'd,
Close ambush'd nigh the spacious hall he plac'd.
Then bids prepare the hospitable treat:
Vain shews of love to veil his felon-hate!
To grace the victor's welcome from the wars,
A train of coursers, and triumphal cars,
Magnificent he leads: the royal guest,
Thoughtless of ill, accepts the fraudful feast.
The troop forth issuing from the dark recess,
With homicidal rage the king oppress!
So, whilst he feeds luxurious in the stall,
The sovereign of the herd is doom'd to fall.
The partners of his fame and toils at Troy,
Around their lord, a mighty ruin! lie:
Mix'd with the brave, the base invaders bleed;
Egysthus sole survives to boast the deed.'
'He said; chill horrors shook my shivering soul,
Rack'd with convulsive pangs in dust I roll;
And hate, in madness of extreme despair,
To view the sun, or breathe the vital air:
But when superior to the rage of woe,
I stood restor'd, and tears had ceas'd to flow;
Lenient of grief, the pitying god began—
'Forget the brother, and resume the man:
To fate's supreme dispose the dead resign,
That care be fate's, a speedy passage thine.

Still lives the wretch who wrought the death deplor'd,
But lives a victim for thy vengeful sword;
Unless with filial rage Orestes glow,
And swift prevent the meditated blow:
You timely will return a welcome guest,
With him to share the sad funereal feast.'

"He said: new thoughts my beating heart employ,
My gloomy soul receives a gleam of joy.
Fair hope revives; and eager I address'd
The prescient godhead to reveal the rest.
'The doom decreed of those disastrous two
I've heard with pain, but oh! the tale pursue;
What third brave son of Mars the fates constrain
To roam the howling desert of the main:
Or in eternal shade if cold he lies,
Provoke new sorrow from these grateful eyes.'

'That chief (rejoin'd the god) his race derives
From Ithaca, and wondrous woes survives;
Laertes' son: girt with circumfluous tides,
He still calamitous constraint abides.
Him in Calypso's cave of late I view'd,
When streaming grief his faded cheek bedew'd.
But vain his prayer, his arts are vain, to move
The' enamour'd goddess, or elude her love:
His vessel sunk, and dear companions lost,
He lives reluctant on a foreign coast.
But oh, belov'd by heaven! reserv'd to thee
A happier lot the smiling fates decree!
Free from that law, beneath whose mortal sway
Matter is chang'd, and varying forms decay,
Elysium shall be thine; the blissful plains
Of utmost earth, where Rhadamanthus reigns.
Joys ever young, unmix'd with pain or fear,
Fill the wide circle of the' eternal year:

Stern winter smiles on that auspicious clime:
The fields are florid with unfading prime:
From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
Mould the round hail, or flake the fleecy snow;
But from the breezy deep the bless'd inhale
The fragrant murmurs of the western gale.
This grace peculiar will the gods afford
To thee the son of Jove, and beauteous Helen's lord.'
'He ceas'd, and plunging in the vast profound,
Beneath the god the whirling billows bound.
Then speeding back, involv'd in various thought,
My friends attending at the shore I sought.
Arriv'd, the rage of hunger we control,
Till night with silent shade invests the pole;
Then lose the cares of life in pleasing rest.—
Soon as the morn reveals the roseate east,
With sails we wing the masts, our anchors weigh,
Unmoor the fleet, and rush into the sea.
Rang'd on the banks, beneath our equal oars
White curl the waves, and the vex'd ocean roars.
Then steering backward from the Pharian isle,
We gain the stream of Jove-descended Nile:
There quit the ships, and on the destin'd shore
With ritual hecatombs the gods adore:
Their wrath aton'd, to Agamemnon's name
A cenotaph I raise of deathless fame.
These rites to piety and grief discharg'd,
The friendly gods a springing gale enlarg'd:
The fleet swift tilting o'er the surges flew,
Till Grecian cliffs appear'd, a blissful view!
'Thy patient ear hath heard me long relate
A story, fruitful of disastrous fate:
And now, young prince, indulge my fond request;
Be Sparta honour'd with his royal guest,

Till from his eastern goal, the joyous sun
His twelfth diurnal race begins to run.
Meantime my train the friendly gifts prepare,
Three sprightly coursers, and a polish'd car:
With these, a goblet of capacious mould,
Figur'd with art to dignify the gold,
(Form'd for libation to the gods) shall prove
A pledge and monument of sacred love.'

'My quick return (young Ithacus rejoin'd)
Damps the warm wishes of my raptur'd mind:
Did not my fate my needful haste constrain,
Charm'd by your speech, so graceful and humane,
Lost in delight the circling year would roll,
While deep attention fix'd my listening soul.
But now to Pyle permit my destin'd way,
My lov'd associates chide my long delay:
In dear remembrance of your royal grace,
I take the present of the promis'd vase;
The coursers for the champain sports, retain;
That gift our barren rocks will render vain:
Horrid with cliffs, our meagre land allows
Thin herbage for the mountain goat to browze,
But neither mead nor plain supplies, to feed
The sprightly courser, or indulge his speed:
To sea-surrounded realms the gods assign
Small tract of fertile lawn, the least to mine.'

His hand the king with tender passion press'd,
And smiling, thus the royal youth address'd;
'O early worth! a soul so wise, and young,
Proclaims you from the sage Ulysses sprung.
Selected from my stores, of matchless price,
An urn shall recompense your prudent choice;
Not mean the massy mould of silver, grac'd
By Vulcan's art, the verge with gold enchas'd:

A pledge the sceptred power of Sidon gave,
When to his realm I plough'd the orient wave.'
Thus they alternate; while with artful care
The menial train the regal feast prepare:
The firstlings of the flock are doom'd to die;
Rich fragrant wines the cheering bowl supply;
A female band the gift of Ceres bring;
And the gilt roofs with genial triumph ring.
Meanwhile, in Ithaca, the suitor pow'rs
In active games divide their jovial hours:
In areas varied with mosaic art,
Some whirl the disk, and some the javelin dart.
Aside, sequester'd from the vast resort,
Antinous sat spectator of the sport;
With great Eurymachus, of worth confess'd,
And high descent, superior to the rest;
Whom young Noëmon lowly thus address'd:
'My ship equipp'd within the neighbouring port,
The prince, departing for the Pylian court,
Requested for his speed; but courteous, say
When steers he home, or why this long delay?
For Elis I should sail with utmost speed,
To' import twelve mares with their luxurious feed,
And twelve young mules, a strong laborious race,
New to the plough, unpractis'd in the trace.'
Unknowing of the course to Pyle design'd,
A sudden horror seiz'd on either mind:
The prince in rural bower they fondly thought,
Numbering his flocks and herds, not far remote.
'Relate (Antinous cries), devoid of guile,
When spread the prince his sail for distant Pyle?
Did chosen chiefs across the gulfy main
Attend his voyage, or domestic train?

Spontaneous did you speed his secret course,
Or was the vessel seiz'd by fraud or force?'
'With willing duty, not reluctant mind,
(Noëmon cried) the vessel was resign'd.
Who in the balance, with the great affairs
Of courts, presume to weigh their private cares?
With him, the peerage next in power to you;
And Mentor, captain of the lordly crew,
Or some celestial in his reverend form,
Safe from the secret rock and adverse storm,
Pilots the course: for when the glimmering ray
Of yester dawn disclos'd the tender day,
Mentor himself I saw, and much admir'd.'—
Then ceas'd the youth, and from the court retir'd.
Confounded and appall'd, the' unfinish'd game
The suitors quit, and all to council came:
Antinous first the' assembled peers address'd,
Rage sparkling in his eyes, and burning in his breast.
'O shame to manhood! shall one daring boy
The scheme of all our happiness destroy?
Fly unperceiv'd, seducing half the flower
Of nobles, and invite a foreign power?
The ponderous engine rais'd to crush us all,
Recoiling, on his head is sure to fall.
Instant prepare me, on the neighbouring strand,
With twenty chosen mates a vessel mann'd;
For ambush'd close beneath the Samian shore
His ship returning shall my spies explore:
He soon his rashness shall with life atone,
Seek for his father's fate, but find his own.'
With vast applause the sentence all approve;
Then rise, and to the feastful hall remove:
Swift to the queen the herald Medon ran,
Who heard the consult of the dire divan:

Before her dome the royal matron stands,
And thus the message of his haste demands:
'What will the suitors? must my servant train
The' allotted labours of the day refrain,
For them to form some exquisite repast?
Heaven grant this festival may prove their last!
Or if they still must live, from me remove
The double plague of luxury and love!
Forbear, ye sons of insolence! forbear,
In riot to consume a wretched heir.
In the young soul illustrious thought to raise,
Were ye not tutor'd with Ulysses' praise?
Have not your fathers oft my lord defin'd,
Gentle of speech, beneficent of mind?
Some kings with arbitrary rage devour,
Or in their tyrant-minions vest the pow'r:
Ulysses let no partial favours fall,
The people's parent, he protected all:
But absent now, perfidious and ingrate!
His stores ye ravage, and usurp his state.'
He thus: 'O were the woes you speak the worst;
They form a deed more odious and accurs'd;
More dreadful than your boding soul divines:
But pitying Jové avert the dire designs!
The darling object of your royal care
Is mark'd to perish in a deathful snare;
Before he anchors in his native port,
From Pyle ressailing and the Spartan court;
Horrid to speak! in ambush is decreed
The hope and heir of Ithaca to bleed!'
Sudden she sunk beneath the weighty woes,
The vital streams a chilling horror froze:
The big round tear stands trembling in her eye,
And on her tongue imperfect accents die.

At length, in tender language, interwove
With sighs, she thus express'd her anxious love:
'Why rashly would my son his fate explore,
Ride the wild waves, and quit the safer shore?
Did he, with all the greatly wretched, crave
A blank oblivion, and a friendly grave?'
'Tis not (replied the sage) to Medon given
To know, if some inhabitant of heaven
In his young breast the daring thought inspir'd,
Or if alone, with filial duty fir'd,
The winds and waves he tempts in early bloom,
Studious to learn his absent father's doom.'
The sage retir'd: unable to control
The mighty griefs that swell her labouring soul,
Rolling convulsive on the floor, is seen
The piteous object of a prostrate queen.
Words to her dumb complaint a pause supplies,
And breath, to waste in unavailing cries.
Around their sovereign wept the menial fair,
To whom she thus address'd her deep despair:
'Behold a wretch whom all the gods consign
To woe! Did ever sorrows equal mine?
Long to my joys my dearest lord is lost,
His country's buckler, and the Grecian boast:
Now from my fond embrace, by tempests torn,
Our other column of the state is borne:
Nor took a kind adieu, nor sought consent!—
Unkind confederates in his dire intent!
Ill suits it with your shews of dutcous zeal,
From me the purpos'd voyage to conceal:
Though at the solemn midnight hour he rose,
Why did you fear to trouble my repose?
He either had obey'd my fond desire,
Or seen his mother pierc'd with grief expire.

Bid Dolius quick attend, the faithful slave
Whom to my nuptial train Icarius gave,
To' attend the fruit-groves: with incessant speed
He shall this violence of death decreed,
To good Laertes tell. Experienc'd age
May timely intercept the ruffian-rage,
Convene the tribes, the murderous plot reveal,
And to their power to save his race appeal.'
Then Eurycles thus: 'My dearest dread!
Though to the sword I bow this hoary head,
Or if a dungeon be the pain decreed,
I own me conscious of the' unpleasing deed:
Auxiliar to his flight, my aid implor'd,
With wine and viands I the vessel stor'd:
A solemn oath impos'd, the secret seal'd,
Till the twelfth dawn the light of heaven reveal'd.
Dreading the' effect of a fond mother's fear,
He dar'd not violate your royal ear.
But bathe, and in imperial robes array'd,
Pay due devotions to the martial maid,
And rest affianc'd in her guardian aid.
Send not to good Laertes, nor engage
In toils of state the miseries of age:
'Tis impious to surmise, the powers divine
To ruin doom the Jove-descended line:
Long shall the race of just Arcesius reign,
And isles remote enlarge his old domain.'
The queen her speech with calm attention hears,
Her eyes restrain the silver-streaming tears:
She bathes, and, rob'd, the sacred dome ascends:
Her pious speed a female train attends:
The salted cakes in canisters are laid,
And thus the queen invokes Minerva's aid:
'Daughter divine of Jove! whose arm can wield
The' avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield!

If e'er Ulysses to thy fane preferr'd
The best and choicest of his flock and herd;
Hear, goddess, hear, by those oblations won;
And for the pious sire preserve the son:
His wish'd return with happy power befriend,
And on the suitors let thy wrath descend!'
  She cease'd; shrill ecstasies of joy declare
The favouring goddess present to the pray'r:
The suitors heard, and deem'd the mirthful voice
A signal of her hymeneal choice;
Whilst one most jovial thus accosts the board:
  'Too late the queen selects a second lord;
In evil hour the nuptial rite intends,
When o'er her son disastrous death impends.'
  Thus he unskill'd of what the fates provide.
But with severe rebuke Antinous cried:
  'These empty vaunts will make the voyage vain;
Alarm not with discourse the menial train:
The great event with silent hope attend;
Our deeds alone our counsel must commend.'
  His speech thus ended short, he frowning rose,
And twenty chiefs renown'd for valour chose:
Down to the strand he speeds with haughty strides,
Where anchor'd in the bay the vessel rides,
Replete with mail and military store,
In all her tackle trim to quit the shore.
The desperate crew ascend, unfurl the sails;
(The sea-ward prow invites the tardy gales)
Then take repast, till Hesperus display'd
His golden circlet in the western shade.
  Meantime the queen without refection due,
Heart-wounded, to the bed of state withdrew:
In her sad breast the prince's fortunes roll,
And hope and doubt alternate seize her soul.

So when the woodman's toil her cave surrounds,
And with the hunter's cry the grove resounds;
With grief and rage the mother-lion stung,
Fearless herself, yet trembles for her young.
While pensive in the silent slumbrous shade,
Sleep's gentle powers her drooping eyes invade;
Minerva, life-like on embodied air
Impress'd the form of Iphthima the fair:
(Icarius' daughter she, whose blooming charms
Allur'd Eumelus to her virgin-arms;
A sceptred lord, who o'er the fruitful plain
Of Thessaly, wide stretch'd his ample reign)
As Pallas will'd, along the sable skies
To calm the queen the phantom-sister flies.
Swift on the regal dome descending right,
The bolted valves are pervious to her flight.
Close to her head the pleasing vision stands,
And thus performs Minerva's high commands:
'O why, Penelope, this causeless fear,
To render sleep's soft blessing insincere?
Alike devote to sorrow's dire extreme
The day reflection, and the midnight dream!
Thy son, the gods propitious will restore,
And bid thee cease his absence to deplore.'
To whom the queen, whilst yet her pensive mind
Was in the silent gates of sleep confin'd:
'O sister, to my soul for ever dear,
Why this first visit to reprove my fear?
How in a realm so distant should you know
From what deep source my ceaseless sorrows flow?
To all my hope my royal lord is lost,
His country's buckler, and the Grecian boast;
And with consummate woe to weigh me down,
The heir of all his honours, and his crown,

My darling son is fled! an easy prey
To the fierce storms, or men more fierce than they;
Who, in a league of blood associates sworn,
Will intercept the' unwary youth's return.'
'Courage resume (the shadowy form replied),
In the protecting care of heaven confide:
On him attends the blue-ey'd martial maid;
What earthly can implore a surer aid?
Me now the guardian goddess deigns to send,
To bid thee patient his return attend.'
The queen replies: 'If in the bless'd abodes,
A goddess, thou hast commerce with the gods;
Say, breathes my lord the blissful realm of light,
Or lies he wrapt in ever-during night?'
'Inquire not of his doom (the phantom cries),
I speak not all the counsel of the skies;
Nor must indulge with vain discourse, or long,
The windy satisfaction of the tongue.'
Swift through the valves the visionary fair
Repass'd, and viewless mix'd with common air.
The queen awakes, deliver'd of her woes:
With florid joy her heart dilating glows:
The vision, manifest of future fate,
Makes her with hope her son's arrival wait.
Meantime the suitors plough the watry plain,
Telemachus in thought already slain!
When sight of lessening Ithaca was lost,
Their sail directed for the Samian coast,
A small but verdant isle appear'd in view,
And Asteris the' advancing pilot knew:
An ample port the rocks projected form,
To break the rolling waves, and ruffling storm:
That safe recess they gain with happy speed,
And in close ambush wait the murderous deed.

THE

FIFTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

ARGUMENT.

THE DEPARTURE OF ULYSSES FROM CALYPSO.

PALLAS, in a council of the gods, complains of the detention of Ulysses in the island of Calypso; whereupon Mercury is sent to command his removal. The seat of Calypso described. She consents with much difficulty, and Ulysses builds a vessel with his own hands, on which he embarks. Neptune overtakes him with a terrible tempest, in which he is shipwrecked, and in the last danger of death; till Leucothea, a sea-goddess, assists him, and after innumerable perils he gets ashore on Phæacia.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK V.

The saffron morn, with early blushes spread,
Now rose refulgent from Tithonus' bed;
With new-born day to gladden mortal sight,
And gild the courts of heaven with sacred light.
Then met the' eternal synod of the sky,
Before the god who thunders from on high,
Supreme in might, sublime in majesty.
Pallas, to these, deplores the' unequal fates
Of wise Ulysses, and his toils relates;
Her hero's danger touch'd the pitying power,
The nymph's seducements, and the magic bower.
Thus she began her plaint:—'Immortal Jove!
And you who fill the blissful seats above!
Let kings no more with gentle mercy sway,
Or bless a people willing to obey,
But crush the nations with an iron rod,
And every monarch be the scourge of god,
If from your thoughts Ulysses you remove,
Who rul'd his subjects with a father's love.
Sole in an isle, encircled by the main,
Abandon'd, banish'd from his native reign,
Unbless'd he sighs, detain'd by lawless charms,
And press'd unwilling in Calypso's arms.

Nor friends are there, nor vessels to convey,
Nor oars to cut the' immeasurable way.
And now fierce traitors, studious to destroy
His only son, their ambush'd fraud employ;
Who, pious, following his great father's fame,
To sacred Pylos and to Sparta came.' [forms
'What words are these? (replied the power who
The clouds of night, and darkens heaven with storms)
Is not already in thy soul decreed,
The chief's return shall make the guilty bleed?
What cannot wisdom do? Thou may'st restore
The son in safety to his native shore;
While the fell foes who late in ambush lay,
With fraud defeated, measure back their way.'
Then thus to Hermes the command was given:
'Hermes, thou chosen messenger of heaven!
Go, to the nymph be these our orders borne:
'Tis Jove's decree Ulysses shall return;
The patient man shall view his old abodes,
Nor help'd by mortal hand, nor guiding gods;
In twice ten days shall fertile Scheria find,
Alone, and floating to the wave and wind.
The bold Phæacians there, whose haughty line
Is mix'd with gods, half human, half divine,
The chief shall honour as some heavenly guest,
And swift transport him to his place of rest.
His vessels loaded with a plenteous store
Of brass, of vestures, and resplendent ore,
(A richer prize than if his joyful isle
Receiv'd him charg'd with Ilion's noble spoil)
His friends, his country, he shall see, though late;
Such is our sovereign will, and such is fate.'
He spoke. The god who mounts the winged winds
Fast to his feet the golden pinions binds,

That high through fields of air his flight sustain
O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundless main.
He grasps the wand that causes sleep to fly,
Or in soft slumber seals the wakeful eye;
Then shoots from heaven to high Pieria's steep,
And stoops incumbent on the rolling deep.
So watery fowl, that seek their fishy food,
With wings expanded o'er the foaming flood,
Now sailing smooth the level surface sweep;
Now dip their pinions in the briny deep.
Thus o'er the world of waters Hermes flew,
Till now the distant island rose in view;
Then swift ascending from the azure wave,
He took the path that winded to the cave.
Large was the grot in which the nymph he found,
(The fair-hair'd nymph with every beauty crown'd)
She sat and sung; the rocks resound her lays:
The cave was brighten'd with a rising blaze:
Cedar and frankincense, an odorous pile,
Flam'd on the hearth, and wide perfum'd the isle;
While she with work and song the time divides,
And through the loom the golden shuttle guides.
Without the grot, a various silvan scene
Appear'd around, and groves of living green;
Poplars and alders ever quivering play'd,
And nodding cypress form'd a fragrant shade;
On whose high branches, waving with the storm,
The birds of broadest wing their mansion form,
The chough, the sea-mew, the loquacious crow,
And scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.
Depending vines the shelving cavern screen,
With purple clusters blushing through the green.
Four limpid fountains from the clefts distil,
And every fountain pours a sev'ral rill,
In mazy windings wandering down the hill:

Where bloomy meads with vivid greens were
And glowing violets threw odours round. [crown'd,
A scene, where, if a god should cast his sight,
A god might gaze, and wander with delight!
Joy touch'd the messenger of heaven: he stay'd
Entranc'd, and all the blissful haunt survey'd.
Him, entering in the cave, Calypso knew;
For powers celestial to each other's view
Stand still confess'd, though distant far they lie
To habitants of earth, or sea, or sky.
But sad Ulysses, by himself apart,
Pour'd the big sorrows of his swelling heart;
All on the lonely shore he sat to weep,
And roll'd his eyes around the restless deep;
Toward his lov'd coast he roll'd his eyes in vain,
Till, dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.
Now graceful seated on her shining throne,
To Hermes thus the nymph divine begun:
'God of the golden wand! on what behest
Arriv'st thou here, an unexpected guest?
Lov'd as thou art, thy free injunctions lay;
'Tis mine, with joy and duty to obey.
Till now a stranger, in a happy hour
Approach, and taste the dainties of my bow'r.'
Thus having spoke, the nymph the table spread:
(Ambrosial cates, with nectar rosy-red)
Hermes the hospitable rite partook,
Divine refection! then, recruited, spoke.
'What mov'd this journey from my native sky,
A goddess asks, nor can a god deny;
Hear then the truth: By mighty Jove's command,
Unwilling, have I trod this pleasing land;
For who, self-mov'd, with weary wing would sweep
Such length of ocean and unmeasur'd deep;

A world of waters! far from all the ways
Where men frequent, or sacred altars blaze?
But to Jove's will submission we must pay;
What power so great, to dare to disobey?
A man, he says, a man resides with thee,
Of all his kind most worn with misery.
The Greeks (whose arms for nine long years employ'd
Their force on Ilion, in the tenth destroy'd)
At length embarking in a luckless hour,
With conquest proud, incens'd Minerva's pow'r:
Hence on the guilty race her vengeance hurl'd,
With storms pursued them through the liquid world.
There all his vessels sunk beneath the wave!
There all his dear companions found their grave!
Sav'd from the jaws of death by heaven's decree,
The tempest drove him to these shores and thee.
Him, Jove now orders to his native lands
Straight to dismiss; so destiny commands:
Impatient fate his near return attends,
And calls him to his country, and his friends
E'en to her inmost soul the goddess shook;
Then thus her anguish and her passion broke:
'Ungracious gods! with spite and envy curst!
Still to your own ethereal race the worst!
Ye envy mortal and immortal joy,
And love, the only sweet of life, destroy.
Did ever goddess by her charms engage
A favour'd mortal, and not feel your rage?
So when Aurora sought Orion's love,
Her joys disturb'd your blissful hours above,
Till in Ortygia, Dian's winged dart
Had pierc'd the hapless hunter to the heart.
So when the covert of the thrice-ear'd field
Saw stately Ceres to her passion yield,

Scarce could Iäsion taste her heavenly charms,
But Jove's swift lightning scorch'd him in her arms.
And is it now my turn, ye mighty powers!
Am I the envy of your blissful bowers?
A man, an outcast to the storm and wave,
It was my crime to pity, and to save,
When he who thunders rent his bark in twain,
And sunk his brave companions in the main.
Alone, abandon'd, in mid-ocean toss'd,
The sport of winds, and driv'n from ev'ry coast,
Hither this man of miseries I led,
Receiv'd the friendless, and the hungry fed;
Nay promis'd (vainly promis'd!) to bestow
Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.
'Tis past —— and Jove decrees he shall remove;
Gods as we are, we are but slaves to Jove.
Go then he may; (he must, if he ordain,
Try all those dangers, all those deeps, again)
But never, never shall Calypso send
To toils like these, her husband and her friend.
What ships have I, what sailors to convey,
What oars to cut the long laborious way?
Yet, I'll direct the safest means to go:
That last advice is all I can bestow.'
To her, the power who bears the charming rod:
'Dismiss the man, nor irritate the god;
Prevent the rage of him who reigns above,
For what so dreadful as the wrath of Jove?'
Thus having said, he cut the cleaving sky,
And in a moment vanish'd from her eye.
The nymph, obedient to divine command,
To seek Ulysses, pac'd along the sand:
Him pensive on the lonely beach she found,
With streaming eyes in briny torrents drown'd,

And inly pining for his native shore;
For now the soft enchantress pleas'd no more;
For now, reluctant, and constrain'd by charms,
Absent he lay in her desiring arms,
In slumber wore the heavy night away,
On rocks and shores consum'd the tedious day;
There sat all desolate, and sigh'd alone,
With echoing sorrows made the mountains groan,
And roll'd his eyes o'er all the restless main,
Till, dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.
Here, on the musing mood the goddess press'd,
Approaching soft; and thus the chief address'd:
'Unhappy man! to wasting woes a prey,
No more in sorrows languish life away:
Free as the winds I give thee now to rove—
Go, fell the timber of yon lofty grove,
And form a raft, and build the rising ship,
Sublime to bear thee o'er the gloomy deep.
To store the vessel let the care be mine,
With water from the rock, and rosy wine,
And life-sustaining bread, and fair array,
And prosperous gales to waft thee on the way.
These if the gods with my desires comply,
(The gods, alas! more mighty far than I,
And better skill'd in dark events to come)
In peace shall land thee at thy native home.'
With sighs, Ulysses heard the words she spoke,
Then thus his melancholy silence broke:
'Some other motive, goddess! sways thy mind,
Some close design, or turn of womankind;
Nor my return the end, nor this the way,
On a slight raft to pass the swelling sea,
Huge, horrid, vast! where scarce in safety sails
The best built ship, though Jove inspire the gales.

The bold proposal how shall I fulfil;
Dark as I am, unconscious of thy will? [bodes;
Swear then, thou mean'st not what my soul fore-
Swear by the solemn oath that bind the gods!'
Him, while he spoke, with smiles Calypso ey'd,
And gently grasp'd his hand, and thus replied:
'This shows thee, friend, by old experience taught,
And learn'd in all the wiles of human thought.
How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise?
But hear, O earth, and hear, ye sacred skies!
And thou, O Styx! whose formidable floods
Glide through the shades, and bind the' attesting gods!
No form'd design, no meditated end
Lurks in the counsel of thy faithful friend;
Kind the persuasion, and sincere my aim;
The same my practice, were my fate the same.
Heaven has not curs'd me with a heart of steel,
But given the sense, to pity, and to feel.'
Thus having said, the goddess march'd before:
He trod her footsteps in the sandy shore.
At the cool cave arriv'd, they took their state;
He fill'd the throne where Mercury had sat;
For him, the nymph a rich repast ordains,
Such as the mortal life of man sustains;
Before herself were plac'd the cates divine,
Ambrosial banquet, and celestial wine.
Their hunger satiate, and their thirst repress'd,
Thus spoke Calypso to her godlike guest:
'Ulysses! (with a sigh she thus began)
O sprung from gods! in wisdom more than man!
Is then thy home the passion of thy heart?
Thus wilt thou leave me, are we thus to part?
Farewell! and ever joyful may'st thou be,
Nor break the transport with one thought of me.

But ah, Ulysses! wert thou given to know
What fate yet dooms thee, yet, to undergo;
Thy heart might settle in this scene of ease, [please.
And e'en these slighted charms might learn to
A willing goddess, and immortal life,
Might banish from thy mind an absent wife.
Am I inferior to a mortal dame?
Less soft my feature, less august my frame?
Or shall the daughters of mankind compare
Their earth-born beauties with the heavenly fair?'
'Alas! for this (the prudent man replies)
Against Ulysses shall thy anger rise?
Lov'd and ador'd, O goddess! as thou art,
Forgive the weakness of a human heart.
Though well I see thy graces far above
The dear, though mortal, object of my love,
Of youth eternal well the difference know,
And the short date of fading charms below;
Yet every day, while absent thus I roam,
I languish to return, and die at home.
Whate'er the gods shall destine me to bear
In the black ocean, or the watery war,
'Tis mine to master with a constant mind;
Inur'd to perils, to the worst resign'd.
By seas, by wars, so many dangers run;
Still I can suffer: their high will be done!'
Thus while he spoke, the beamy sun descends,
And rising night her friendly shade extends.
To the close grot the lonely pair remove,
And slept delighted with the gifts of love.
When rosy morning call'd them from their rest,
Ulysses rob'd him in the cloak and vest.
The nymph's fair head a veil transparent grac'd;
Her swelling loins a radiant zone embrac'd

With flowers of gold: an under robe, unbound,
In snowy waves flow'd glittering on the ground.
Forth issuing thus, she gave him first to wield
A weighty axe, with truest temper steel'd,
And double edg'd; the handle smooth and plain,
Wrought of the clouded olive's easy grain;
And next, a wedge to drive with sweepy sway:
Then to the neighbouring forest led the way.
On the lone island's utmost verge there stood
Of poplars, pines, and firs, a lofty wood,
Whose leafless summits to the skies aspire,
Scorch'd by the sun, or sear'd by heavenly fire:
(Already dried). These pointing out to view,
The nymph just show'd him, and with tears withdrew.
Now toils the hero; trees on trees o'erthrown
Fall crackling round him, and the forests groan:
Sudden, full twenty on the plain are strow'd,
And lopp'd, and lighten'd of their branchy load.
At equal angles these dispos'd to join,
He smooth'd and squar'd them, by the rule and line.
(The wimbles for the work Calypso found)
With those he pierc'd them, and with clinchers bound.
Long and capacious as a shipwright forms
Some bark's broad bottom to outride the storms,
So large he built the raft: then ribb'd it strong
From space to space, and nail'd the planks along;
These form'd the sides: the deck he fashion'd last;
Then o'er the vessel rais'd the taper mast,
With crossing sail-yards dancing in the wind;
And to the helm the guiding rudder join'd.
(With yielding osiers fenc'd, to break the force
Of surging waves, and steer the steady course)
Thy loom, Calypso! for the future sails
Supplied the cloth, capacious of the gales.

With stays and cordage last he rigg'd the ship,
And, roll'd on levers, launch'd her in the deep.
Four days were past, and now, the work complete,
Shone the fifth morn: when from her sacred seat
The nymph dismiss'd him (odorous garments given),
And bath'd in fragrant oils that breath'd of heaven;
Then fill'd two goat-skins with her hands divine,
With water one, and one with sable wine;
Of every kind, provisions heav'd aboard;
And the full decks with copious viands stor'd.
The goddess, last, a gentle breeze supplies,
To curl old ocean, and to warm the skies.
And now rejoicing in the prosperous gales,
With beating heart Ulysses spreads his sails;
Plac'd at the helm he sat, and mark'd the skies,
Nor clos'd in sleep his ever-watchful eyes.
There view'd the Pleiads, and the northern team,
And great Orion's more refulgent beam,
To which, around the axle of the sky
The bear revolving, points his golden eye:
Who shines exalted on the' ethereal plain,
Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.
Far on the left those radiant fires to keep
The nymph directed, as he sail'd the deep.
Full seventeen nights he cut the foamy way;
The distant land appear'd the following day:
Then swell'd to sight Phæacia's dusky coast,
And woody mountains, half in vapours lost;
That lay before him, indistinct and vast,
Like a broad shield amid the watery waste.
But him, thus voyaging the deeps below,
From far, on Solymé's aërial brow,
The king of Ocean saw, and seeing burn'd:
(From Ethiopia's happy climes return'd:)

The raging monarch shook his azure head,
And thus in secret to his soul he said:
'Heavens! how uncertain are the powers on high!
Is then revers'd the sentence of the sky,
In one man's favour; while a distant guest
I shar'd secure the Ethiopian feast?
Behold how near Phæacia's land he draws!
The land, affix'd by fate's eternal laws
To end his toils. Is then our anger vain?
No; if this sceptre yet commands the main.'
He spoke, and high the forky trident hurl'd,
Rolls clouds on clouds, and stirs the watery world,
At once the face of earth and sea deforms,
Swells all the winds, and rouses all the storms.
Down rush'd the night; east, west together roar;
And south, and north, roll mountains to the shore;
Then shook the hero, to despair resign'd,
And question'd thus his yet-unconquer'd mind:
'Wretch that I am! what further fates attend
This life of toils, and what my destin'd end?
Too well, alas! the island goddess knew
On the black sea what perils should ensue.
New horrors now this destin'd head enclose;
Unfill'd is yet the measure of my woes;
With what a cloud the brows of heaven are crown'd!
What raging winds! what roaring waters round!
'Tis Jove himself the swelling tempest rears;
Death, present death, on every side appears.
Happy! thrice happy! who, in battle slain,
Press'd, in Atrides' cause, the Trojan plain:
Oh! had I died before that well-fought wall;
Had some distinguish'd day renown'd my fall;
(Such as was that, when showers of javelins fled
From conquering Troy around Achilles dead)

All Greece had paid me solemn funerals then,
And spread my glory with the sons of men.
A shameful fate now hides my hapless head,
Unwept, unnoted, and for ever dead!'
A mighty wave rush'd o'er him as he spoke,
The raft it cover'd, and the mast it broke;
Swept from the deck, and from the rudder torn,
Far on the swelling surge the chief was borne:
While by the howling tempest rent in twain
Flew sail and sail-yards rattling o'er the main.
Long press'd, he heav'd beneath the weighty wave
Clogg'd by the cumbrous vest Calypso gave:
At length emerging, from his nostrils wide
And gushing mouth, effus'd the briny tide;
E'en then not mindless of his last retreat,
He seiz'd the raft, and leap'd into his seat,
Strong with the fear of death. The rolling flood
Now here, now there, impell'd the floating wood.
As when a heap of gather'd thorns is cast,
Now to, now fro, before the' autumnal blast;
Together clung, it rolls around the field;
So roll'd the float, and so its texture held:
And now the south, and now the north, bear sway,
And now the east the foamy floods obey,
And now the west wind whirls it o'er the sea.
The wandering chief, with toils on toils oppress'd,
Leucothea saw, and pity touch'd her breast:
(Herself a mortal once, of Cadmus' strain,
But now an azure sister of the main)
Swift as a sea-mew springing from the flood,
All radiant on the raft the goddess stood;
Then thus address'd him: 'Thou, whom heaven decrees
To Neptune's wrath, stern tyrant of the seas,

(Unequal contest!) not his rage and pow'r,
Great as he is, such virtue shall devour.
What I suggest thy wisdom will perform:
Forsake thy float, and leave it to the storm;
Strip off thy garments; Neptune's fury brave
With naked strength, and plunge into the wave.
To reach Phæacia all thy nerves extend:
There fate decrees thy miseries shall end.
This heavenly scarf beneath thy bosom bind,
And live; give all thy terrors to the wind.
Soon as thy arms the happy shore shall gain,
Return the gift, and cast it in the main;
Observe my orders, and with heed obey,
Cast it far off, and turn thy eyes away.'

With that, her hand the sacred veil bestows,
Then down the deeps she div'd from whence she rose;
A moment snatch'd the shining form away,
And all was cover'd with the curling sea.

Struck with amaze, yet still to doubt inclin'd,
He stands suspended, and explores his mind.
'Whall shall I do? Unhappy me! who knows
But other gods intend me other woes?
Whoe'er thou art, I shall not blindly join
Thy pleaded reason, but consult with mine:
For scarce in ken appears that distant isle
Thy voice foretels me shall conclude my toil.
Thus then I judge: while yet the planks sustain
The wild waves' fury, here I fix'd remain;
But when their texture to the tempest yields,
I launch adventurous on the liquid fields,
Join to the help of gods the strength of man,
And take this method, since the best I can.'

While thus his thoughts an anxious council hold,
The raging god a watery mountain roll'd;

Like a black sheet the whelming billows spread,
Burst o'er the float, and thunder'd on his head.
Planks, beams, disparted fly: the scatter'd wood
Rolls diverse, and in fragments strows the flood.
So the rude Boreas, o'er the field new-shorn,
Tosses and drives the scatter'd heaps of corn.
And now a single beam the chief bestrides;
There, pois'd awhile above the bounding tides,
His limbs discumbers of the clinging vest,
And binds the sacred cincture round his breast:
Then prone on ocean in a moment flung, [along,
Stretch'd wide his eager arms, and shot the seas
All naked now, on heaving billows laid,
Stern Neptune ey'd him, and contemptuous said:
'Go, learn'd in woes, and other woes essay!
Go, wander helpless on the watery way:
Thus, thus find out the destin'd shore, and then
(If Jove ordains it) mix with happier men.
Whate'er thy fate, the ills our wrath could raise
Shall last remember'd in thy best of days.'
This said, his sea-green steeds divide the foam,
And reach high Ægæ and the towery dome. [pow'r,
Now, scarce withdrawn the fierce earth-shaking
Jove's daughter, Pallas, watch'd the favouring hour,
Back to their caves she bade the winds to fly,
And hush'd the blustering brethren of the sky.
The drier blasts alone of Boreas away,
And bear him soft on broken waves away;
With gentle force impelling to that shore
Where fate has destin'd he shall toil no more.
And now two nights, and now two days were past,
Since wide he wander'd on the watery waste;
Heav'd on the surge with intermitting breath,
And hourly panting in the arms of death:

The third fair morn now blas'd upon the main;
Then glassy smooth lay all the liquid plain,
The winds were hush'd, the billows scarcely curl'd,
And a dead silence still'd the watery world.
When, lifted on a ridgy wave, he spies
The land at distance, and with sharpen'd eyes.
As pious children joy with vast delight
When a lov'd sire revives before their sight,
(Who lingering long has call'd on death in vain,
Fix'd by some demon to the bed of pain,
Till heaven by miracle his life restore)
So joys Ulysses at the' appearing shore;
And sees (and labours onward as he sees)
The rising forests, and the tufted trees.
And now, as near approaching as the sound
Of human voice the listening ear may wound,
Amidst the rocks he hears a hollow roar
Of murmuring surges breaking on the shore:
Nor peaceful port was there, nor winding bay,
To shield the vessel from the rolling sea,
But cliffs, and shaggy shores, a dreadful sight!
All rough with rocks, with foamy billows white.
Fear seiz'd his slacken'd limbs and beating heart,
As thus he commun'd with his soul apart:
'Ah me! when e'er a length of waters tess'd,
These eyes at last behold the' unhop'd-for coast,
No port receives me from the angry main,
But the loud deeps demand me back again.
Above sharp rocks forbid access; around
Roar the wild waves: beneath, is sea profound!
No footing sure affords the faithless sand,
To stem too rapid, and too deep to stand.
If here I enter, my efforts are vain,
Dash'd on the cliffs, or heav'd into the main;

Or round the island if my course I bend,
Where the ports open, or the shores descend,
Back to the seas the rolling surge may sweep;
And bury all my hopes beneath the deep:
Or some enormous whale the god may send
(For many such on Amphitrite attend):
Too well the turns of mortal chance I know,
And hate relentless of my heavenly foe.'

While thus he thought, a monstrous wave up-bore
The chief, and dash'd him on the craggy shore:
Torn was his skin, nor had the ribs been whole,
But instant Pallas enter'd in his soul.
Close to the cliff with both his hands he clung,
And stuck adherent, and suspended hung;
Till the huge surge roll'd off; then, backward sweep
The refluent tides, and plunge him in the deep.
As when the polypus, from forth his cave
Torn with full force, reluctant beats the wave;
His ragged claws are stuck with stones and sands:
So the rough rock had shagg'd Ulysses' hands.
And now had perish'd, whelm'd beneath the main,
The' unhappy man; e'en fate had been in vain:
But all-subduing Pallas lent her pow'r,
And prudence sav'd him in the needful hour.
Beyond the beating surge his course he bore,
(A wider circle, but in sight of shore)
With longing eyes, observing, to survey
Some smooth ascent, or safe-sequester'd bay.
Between the parting rocks at length he spied
A falling stream with gentler waters glide;
Where to the seas the shelving shore declin'd,
And form'd a bay, impervious to the wind.
To this calm port the glad Ulysses press'd,
And hail'd the river, and its god address'd:

'Whoe'er thou art, before whose streams unknown
I bend, a suppliant at thy watery throne,
Hear, azure king! nor let me fly in vain
To thee from Neptune and the raging main.
Heaven hears and pities hapless men like me,
For sacred e'en to gods is misery:
Let then thy waters give the weary rest,
And save a suppliant, and a man distress'd.'
He pray'd, and straight the gentle stream subsides,
Detains the rushing current of his tides,
Before the wanderer smooths the watry way,
And soft receives him from the rolling sea.
That moment, fainting as he touch'd the shore,
He dropp'd his sinewy arms: his knees no more
Perform'd their office, or his weight upheld:
His swol'n heart heav'd; his bloated body swell'd:
From mouth and nose the briny torrent ran;
And lost in lassitude lay all the man,
Deprive'd of voice, of motion, and of breath;
The soul scarce waking, in the arms of death.
Soon as warm life its wonted office found,
The mindful chief Leucothea's scarf unbound;
Observant of her word, he turn'd aside
His head, and cast it on the rolling tide.
Behind him far, upon the purple waves
The waters waft it, and the nymph receives.
Now parting from the stream, Ulysses found
A mossy bank with pliant rushes crown'd;
The bank he press'd, and gently kiss'd the ground;
Where on the flowery herb as soft he lay,
Thus to his soul the sage began to say:
'What will ye next ordain, ye powers on high?
And yet, ah yet, what fates are we to try?

Here by the stream, if I the night outwear,
Thus spent already, how shall nature bear
The dews descending, and nocturnal air;
Or chilly vapours, breathing from the flood
When morning rises?——If I take the wood,
And in thick shelter of innumerous boughs
Enjoy the comfort gentle sleep allows;
Though fenc'd from cold, and though my toil be pass'd,
What savage beasts may wander in the waste?
Perhaps I yet may fall a bloody prey
To prowling bears, or lions in the way.'
Thus long debating in himself he stood:
At length he took the passage to the wood,
Whose shady horrors on a rising brow
Wav'd high, and frown'd upon the stream below.
There grew two olives, closest of the grove,
With roots entwin'd, and branches interwove;
Alike their leaves, but not alike they smil'd
With sister-fruits; one fertile, one was wild.
Nor here the sun's meridian rays had power,
Nor wind sharp piercing, nor the rushing shower;
The verdant arch so close its texture kept:
Beneath this covert great Ulysses crept.
Of gather'd leaves an ample bed he made,
(Thick strown by tempest through the bowery shade)
Where three at least might winter's cold defy,
Though Boreas rag'd along the' inclement sky.
This store, with joy the patient hero found,
And, sunk amidst them, heap'd the leaves around.
As some poor peasant, fated to reside
Remote from neighbours in a forest wide,
Studious to save what human wants require,
In embers heap'd, preserves the seeds of fire:

Hid in dry foliage thus Ulysses lies,
Till Pallas pour'd soft slumbers on his eyes;
And golden dreams (the gift of sweet repose)
Lull'd all his cares, and banish'd all his woes.

THE

SIXTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

PALLAS appearing in a dream to Nausicaa (the daughter of Alcinous king of Phæacia) commands her to descend to the river, and wash the robes of state, in preparation to her nuptials. Nausicaa goes with her handmaids to the river; where, while the garments are spread on the bank, they divert themselves in sports. Their voices awake Ulysses, who, addressing himself to the princess, is by her relieved and clothed, and receives directions in what manner to apply to the king and queen of the island.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK VI.

While thus the weary wanderer sunk to rest,
And peaceful slumbers calm'd his anxious breast,
The martial maid from heaven's aërial height
Swift to Phæacia wing'd her rapid flight.
In elder times the soft Phæacian train
In ease possess'd the wide Hyperian plain;
Till the Cyclopean race in arms arose,
A lawless nation of gigantic foes;
Then great Nausithous from Hyperia far,
Through seas retreating from the sound of war,
The recreant nation to fair Scheria led,
Where never science rear'd her laurel'd head:
There, round his tribes a strength of wall he rais'd;
To heaven the glittering domes and temples blaz'd;
Just to his realms, he parted grounds from grounds,
And shar'd the lands, and gave the lands their bounds.
Now in the silent grave the monarch lay,
And wise Alcinous held the regal sway.
  To his high palace through the fields of air
The goddess shot: Ulysses was her care.
There as the night in silence roll'd away,
A heaven of charms divine Nausicaa lay:

Through the thick gloom the shining portals blaze:
Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a grace.
Light as the viewless air, the warrior-maid [head;
Glides through the valves, and hovers round her
A favourite virgin's blooming form she took,
From Dymas sprung, and thus the vision spoke:
'Oh indolent! to waste thy hours away!
And sleep'st thou careless of the bridal day?
Thy spousal ornament neglected lies;
Arise, prepare the bridal train, arise!
A just applause the cares of dress impart,
And give soft transport to a parent's heart.
Haste, to the limpid stream direct thy way,
When the gay morn unveils her smiling ray:
Haste to the stream! companion of thy care,
Lo, I thy steps attend, thy labours share.
Virgin, awake! the marriage hour is nigh,
See! from their thrones thy kindred monarchs sigh!
The royal car at early dawn obtain,
And order mules obedient to the rein;
For rough the way, and distant rolls the wave,
Where their fair vests Phæacian virgins lave.
In pomp ride forth; for pomp becomes the great,
And majesty derives a grace from state.'
Then to the palaces of heaven she sails,
Incumbent on the wings of wafting gales:
The seat of gods! the regions mild of peace,
Full joy, and calm eternity of ease.
There no rude winds presume to shake the skies,
No rains descend, no snowy vapours rise;
But on immortal thrones the bless'd repose!
The firmament with living splendours glows.
Hither the goddess wing'd the' aërial way,
Through heaven's eternal gates that blaz'd with day.

Now from her rosy car Aurora shed
The dawn, and all the orient flam'd with red.
Uprose the virgin with the morning light,
Obedient to the vision of the night.
The queen she sought: the queen her hours bestow'd
In curious works; the whirling spindle glow'd
With crimson threads, while busy damsels cull
The snowy fleece, or twist the purpled wool,
Meanwhile Phæacia's peers in council sat:
From his high dome the king descends in state,
Then with a filial awe the royal maid
Approach'd him passing, and submissive said:
'Will my dread sire his ear regardful deign,
And may his child the royal car obtain?
Say, with thy garments shall I bend my way
Where through the vales the mazy waters stray?
A dignity of dress adorns the great,
And kings draw lustre from the robe of state.
Five sons thou hast: three wait the bridal day,
And spotless robes become the young and gay:
So when with praise amid the dance they shine,
By these my cares adorn'd, that praise is mine.'
Thus she: but blushes, ill-restrain'd, betray
Her thoughts intentive on the bridal day.
The conscious sire the dawning blush survey'd,
And smiling thus bespoke the blooming maid:
'My child, my darling joy, the car receive;
That, and whate'er our daughter asks, we give.'
Swift at the royal nod the' attending train
The car prepare, the mules incessant rein.
The blooming virgin with dispatchful cares
Tunics, and stoles, and robes imperial bears.
The queen, assiduous, to her train assigns
The sumptuous viands, and the flavorous wines.

The train prepare a cruise of curious mould,
A cruise of fragrance, form'd of burnish'd gold;
Odour divine! whose soft refreshing streams
Sleek the smooth skin, and scent the snowy limbs.
Now mounting the gay seat, the silken reins
Shine in her hand: along the sounding plains
Swift fly the mules: nor rode the nymph alone;
Around, a bevy of bright damsels shone.
They seek the cisterns where Phæacian dames
Wash their fair garments in the limpid streams;
Where, gathering into depth from falling rills,
The lucid wave a spacious bason fills.
The mules unharness'd range beside the main,
Or crop the verdant herbage of the plain.
Then emulous the royal robes they lave,
And plunge the vestures in the cleansing wave:
(The vestures cleans'd o'erspread the shelly sand,
Their snowy lustre whitens all the strand)
Then with a short repast relieve their toil,
And o'er their limbs diffuse ambrosial oil;
And while the robes imbibe the solar ray,
O'er the green mead the sporting virgins play
(Their shining veils unbound). Along the skies
Toss'd, and retoss'd, the ball incessant flies.
They sport, they feast; Nausicaa lifts her voice,
And warbling sweet, makes earth and heaven rejoice.
As when o'er Erymanth Diana roves,
Or wide Taygetus' resounding groves;
A silvan train the huntress-queen surrounds,
Her rattling quiver from her shoulder sounds;
Fierce in the sport, along the mountain's brow
They bay the boar, or chase the bounding roe:
High o'er the lawn, with more majestic pace,
Above the nymphs she treads with stately grace:

Distinguish'd excellence the goddess proves;
Exults Latona, as the virgin moves.
With equal grace Nausicaa trod the plain,
And shone transcendant o'er the beauteous train.
Meantime (the care and favourite of the skies)
Wrapt in embowering shade, Ulysses lies,
His woes forgot! but Pallas now address'd
To break the bands of all-composing rest.
Forth from her snowy hand Nausicaa threw
The various ball; the ball erroneous flew,
And swam the stream: loud shrieks the virgin-train,
And the loud shriek redoubles from the main.
Wak'd by the shrilling sound, Ulysses rose,
And to the deaf woods, wailing, breath'd his woes:
'Ah me! on what inhospitable coast,
On what new region is Ulysses tost:
Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms;
Or men whose bosom tender pity warms?
What sounds are these that gather from the shores:
The voice of nymphs that haunt the silvan bow'rs,
The fair-hair'd Dryads of the shady wood,
Or azure daughters of the silver flood;
Or human voice? but, issuing from the shades,
Why cease I straight to learn what sound invades?'
Then, where the grove with leaves umbrageous bends
With forceful strength a branch the hero rends;
Around his loins the verdant cincture spreads
A wreathy foliage and concealing shades.
As when a lion in the midnight hours,
Beat by rude blasts, and wet with wintry show'rs,
Descends terrific from the mountain's brow:
With living flames his rolling eye-balls glow;
With conscious strength elate, he bends his way
Majestically fierce, to seize his prey

(The steer or stag); or with keen hunger bold
Springs o'er the fence, and dissipates the fold.
No less a terror, from the neighbouring groves
(Rough from the tossing surge) Ulysses moves;
Urg'd on by want, and recent from the storms;
The brackish oone his manly grace deforms.
Wide o'er the shore with many a piercing cry
To rocks, to caves, the frighted virgins fly;
All but the nymph: the nymph stood fix'd alone,
By Pallas arm'd with boldness not her own.
Meantime in dubious thought the king awaits,
And self-considering, as he stands, debates;
Distant his mournful story to declare,
Or prostrate at her knee address the pray'r.
But fearful to offend, by wisdom sway'd,
At awful distance he accosts the maid:
'If from the skies a goddess, or if earth
(Imperial virgin) boast thy glorious birth,
To thee I bend! if in that bright disguise
Thou visit earth, a daughter of the skies,
Hail, Diana, hail! the huntress of the groves
So shines majestic, and so stately moves,
So breathes an air divine! But if thy race
Be mortal, and this earth thy native place,
Bless'd is the father from whose loins you sprung,
Bless'd is the mother at whose breast you hung,
Bless'd are the brethren who thy blood divide,
To such a miracle of charms allied:
Joyful they see applauding princes gaze,
When stately in the dance you swim the' harmonious maze.
But bless'd o'er all, the youth with heavenly charms,
Who clasps the bright perfection in his arms!
Never, I never view'd till this bless'd hour
Such finish'd grace! I gaze and I adore!

Thus seems the palm with stately honours crown'd
By Phœbus' altars; thus o'erlooks the ground;
The pride of Delos. (By the Delian coast
I voyag'd, leader of a warrior-host,
But ah how chang'd! from thence my sorrow flows;
O fatal voyage, source of all my woes!)
Raptur'd I stood, and as this hour amaz'd,
With reverence at the lofty wonder gaz'd:
Raptur'd I stand! for earth ne'er knew to bear
A plant so stately, or a nymph so fair.
Aw'd from access, I lift my suppliant hands;
For misery, O queen, before thee stands!
Twice ten tempestuous nights I roll'd, resign'd
To roaring billows, and the warring wind;
Heaven bade the deep to spare! but heaven, my foe,
Spares only to inflict some mightier woe!
Inur'd to cares, to death in all its forms;
Outcast I rove, familiar with the storms!
Once more I view the face of humankind:
O let soft pity touch thy generous mind!
Unconscious of what air I breathe, I stand
Naked, defenceless, on a foreign land.
Propitious to my wants, a vest supply
To guard the wretched from the' inclement sky:
So may the gods who heaven and earth control,
Crown the chaste wishes of thy virtuous soul,
On thy soft hours their choicest blessings shed;
Bless'd with a husband be thy bridal bed;
Bless'd be thy husband with a blooming race,
And lasting union crown your blissful days.
The gods, when they supremely bless, bestow
Firm union on their favourites below:
Then envy grieves, with inly-pining hate;
The good exult, and heaven is in our state.'

To whom the nymph: 'O stranger, cease thy care.
Wise is thy soul, but man is born to bear:
Jove weighs affairs of earth in dubious scales,
And the good suffers, while the bad prevails:
Bear, with a soul resign'd, the will of Jove;
Who breathes, must mourn: thy woes are from above.
But since thou tread'st our hospitable shore,
'Tis mine to bid the wretched grieve no more,
To clothe the naked, and thy way to guide—
Know, the Phæacian tribes this land divide;
From great Alcinous' royal loins I spring,
A happy nation, and a happy king.'
Then to her maids—'Why, why, ye coward train,
These fears, this flight? ye fear, and fly in vain.
Dread ye a foe? dismiss that idle dread,
'Tis death with hostile step these shores to tread:
Safe in the love of heaven, an ocean flows
Around our realm, a barrier from the foes;
'Tis ours this son of sorrow to relieve,
Cheer the sad heart, nor let affliction grieve.
By Jove the stranger and the poor are sent,
And what to those we give, to Jove is lent.
Then food supply, and bathe his fainting limbs
Where waving shades obscure the mazy streams.'
Obedient to the call, the chief they guide
To the calm current of the secret tide;
Close by the stream a royal dress they lay,
A vest and robe, with rich embroidery gay:
Then unguents in a vase of gold supply,
That breath'd a fragrance through the balmy sky.
To them the king: 'No longer I detain
Your friendly care; retire, ye virgin-train!
Retire, while from my wearied limbs I lave
The foul pollution of the briny wave;

Ye gods! since this worn frame refection knew,
What scenes have I survey'd of dreadful view?
But, nymphs, recede! sage chastity denies
To raise the blush, or pain the modest eyes.'
The nymphs withdrawn, at once into the tide
Active he bounds; the flashing waves divide:
O'er all his limbs his hands the wave diffuse,
And from his locks compress the weedy ooze;
The balmy oil, a fragrant shower, he sheds;
Then, dress'd, in pomp magnificently treads.
The warrior-goddess gives his frame to shine
With majesty enlarg'd, and air divine:
Back from his brows a length of hair unfurls,
His hyacinthine locks descend in wavy curls.
As by some artist to whom Vulcan gives
His skill divine, a breathing statue lives;
By Pallas taught, he frames the wondrous mould,
And o'er the silver pours the fusil gold:
So Pallas his heroic frame improves
With heavenly bloom, and like a god he moves.
A fragrance breathes around: majestic grace
Attend his steps: the astonish'd virgins gaze.
Soft he reclines along the murmuring seas,
Inhaling freshness from the fanning breeze.
The wondering nymph his glorious port survey'd,
And to her damsels, with amazement, said:
'Not without care divine the stranger treads
This land of joy: his steps some godhead leads:
Would Jove destroy him, sure he had been driven
Far from this realm, the favourite isle of heaven.
Late a sad spectacle of woe he trod
The desert sands, and now he looks a god.
O heaven! in my connubial hour decree
This man my spouse, or such a spouse as he!

But haste, the viands and the bowl provide'—
The maids the viands and the bowl supplied:
Eager he fed, for keen his hunger rag'd,
And with the generous vintage thirst assuag'd.
Now on return her care Nausicaa bends,
The robes resumes, the glittering car ascends,
Far-blooming o'er the field: and as she press'd
The splendid seat, the listening chief address'd:
'Stranger, arise! the sun rolls down the day,
Lo, to the palace I direct thy way;
Where in high state the nobles of the land
Attend my royal sire, a radiant band.
But hear, though wisdom in thy soul presides,
Speaks from thy tongue, and every action guides:
Advance at distance, while I pass the plain
Where o'er the furrows waves the golden grain:
Alone I reascend—With airy mounds
A strength of wall the guarded city bounds:
The jutting land two ample bays divides;
Full through the narrow mouths descend the tides:
The spacious basons arching rocks enclose,
A sure defence from every storm that blows.
Close to the bay great Neptune's fane adjoins;
And near, a forum flank'd with marble shines,
Where the bold youth, the numerous fleets to store,
Shape the broad sail, or smooth the taper oar:
For not the bow they bend, nor boast the skill
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill;
But the tall mast above the vessel rear,
Or teach the fluttering sail to float in air.
They rush into the deep with eager joy,
Climb the steep surge, and through the tempest fly;
A proud, unpolish'd race—To me belongs
The care to shun the blast of slanderous tongues;

Lest malice, prone the virtuous to defame,
Thus with vile censure taint my spotless name:
" What stranger this, whom thus Nausicaa leads?
Heavens! with what graceful majesty he treads!
Perhaps a native of some distant shore,
The future consort of her bridal hour;
Or, rather, some descendant of the skies;
Won by her prayer, the' aërial bridegroom flies.
Heaven on that hour its choicest influence shed,
That gave a foreign spouse to crown her bed!
All, all the godlike worthies that adorn
This realm, she flies; Phæacia is her scorn."
' And just the blame; for female innocence
Not only flies the guilt, but shuns the' offence:
The' unguarded virgin, as unchaste, I blame;
And the least freedom with the sex is shame,
Till our consenting sires a spouse provide,
And public nuptials justify the bride.
' But would'st thou soon review thy native plain?
Attend, and speedy thou shalt pass the main:
Nigh where a grove, with verdant poplars crown'd,
To Pallas sacred, shades the holy ground,
We bend our way: a bubbling fount distils
A lucid lake, and thence descends in rills;
Around the grove a mead with lively green
Falls by degrees, and forms a beauteous scene;
Here a rich juice the royal vineyard pours;
And there the garden yields a waste of flowers.
Hence lies the town, as far as to the ear
Floats a strong shout along the waves of air.
There wait embower'd, while I ascend alone
To great Alcinous on his royal throne.
Arriv'd, advance impatient of delay,
And to the lofty palace bend thy way:

The lofty palace overlooks the town,
From every dome by pomp superior known;
A child may point the way. With earnest gait
Seek thou the queen along the rooms of state;
Her royal hand a woudrous work designs;
Around a circle of bright damsels shines,
Part twist the threads, and part the wool dispose,
While with the purple orb the spindle glows.
High on a throne, amid the Scherian pow'rs,
My royal father shares the genial hours;
But to the queen thy mournful tale disclose,
With the prevailing eloquence of woes:
So shalt thou view with joy thy natal shore,
Though mountains rise between, and oceans roar.'
She added not, but waving as she wheel'd
The silver scourge, it glitter'd o'er the field:
With skill the virgin guides the' embroider'd rein,
Slow rolls the car before the' attending train.
Now whirling down the heavens, the golden day
Shot through the western clouds a dewy ray;
The grove they reach, where from the sacred shade
To Pallas thus the pensive hero pray'd:
'Daughter of Jove! whose arms in thunder wield
The' avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield;
Forsook by thee, in vain I sought thy aid
When booming billows clos'd above my head:
Attend, unconquer'd maid; accord my vows,
Bid the great hear, and pitying heal my woes.'
This heard Minerva, but forbore to fly
(By Neptune aw'd) apparent from the sky:
Stern god! who rag'd with vengeance unrestrain'd,
Till great Ulysses hail'd his native land.

THE

SEVENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE COURT OF ALCINOUS.

THE princess Nausicaa returns to the city, and Ulysses soon after follows thither. He is met by Pallas in the form of a young virgin, who guides him to the palace, and directs him in what manner to address the queen Arete. She then involves him in a mist, which causes him to pass invisible. The palace and gardens of Alcinous described. Ulysses falling at the feet of the queen, the mist disperses, the Phæacians admire, and receive him with respect. The queen inquiring by what means he had the garments he then wore, he relates to her and Alcinous his departure from Calypso, and his arrival on their dominions.

The same day continues, and the book ends with the night.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK VII.

THE patient heavenly man thus suppliant pray'd;
While the slow mules draw on the' imperial maid:
Through the proud street she moves, the public gaze;
The turning wheel before the palace stays.
With ready love her brothers, gathering round,
Receiv'd the vestures, and the mules unbound.
She seeks the bridal bower: a matron there
The rising fire supplies with busy care,
Whose charms in youth her father's heart inflam'd,
Now worn with age, Eurymedusa nam'd:
The captive dame Phæacian rovers bore,
Snatch'd from Epirus, her sweet native shore,
(A grateful prize) and in her bloom bestow'd
On good Alcinous, honour'd as a god:
Nurse of Nausicaa from her infant years,
And tender second to a mother's cares.
  Now from the sacred thicket where he lay,
To town Ulysses took the winding way.
Propitious Pallas, to secure her care,
Around him spread a veil of thicken'd air;
To shun the' encounter of the vulgar crowd,
Insulting still, inquisitive and loud.

When near the fam'd Phæacian walls he drew,
The beauteous city opening to his view,
His step a virgin met, and stood before:
A polish'd urn the seeming virgin bore,
And youthful smil'd; but in the low disguise
Lay hid the goddess with the azure eyes.
'Show me, fair daughter (thus the chief demands),
The house of him who rules these happy lands.
Through many woes and wanderings, lo! I come
To good Alcinous' hospitable dome.
Far from my native coast, I rove alone,
A wretched stranger, and of all unknown!'
The goddess answer'd: 'Father, I obey,
And point the wandering traveller his way:
Well known to me the palace you inquire,
For fast beside it dwells my honour'd sire;
But silent march, nor greet the common train
With question needless, or inquiry vain.
A race of rugged mariners are these;
Unpolish'd men, and boisterous as their seas:
The native islanders alone their care,
And hateful he that breathes a foreign air.
These did the ruler of the deep ordain
To build proud navies, and command the main;
On canvass wings to cut the watery way;
No bird so light, no thought so swift as they.'
Thus having spoke, the' unknown celestial leads:
The footsteps of the deity he treads,
And secret moves along the crowded space,
Unseen of all the rude Phæacian race.
(So Pallas order'd, Pallas to their eyes
The mist objected, and condens'd the skies)
The chief with wonder sees the' extended streets,
The spreading harbours, and the riding fleets;

He next their princes' lofty domes admires,
In separate islands crown'd with rising spires;
And deep intrenchments, and high walls of stone,
That gird the city like a marble zone.
At length the kingly palace gates he view'd:
There stopp'd the goddess, and her speech renew'd:
'My task is done; the mansion you inquire
Appears before you: enter, and admire.
High-thron'd, and feasting, there thou shalt behold
The sceptred rulers. Fear not, but be bold:
A decent boldness ever meets with friends,
Succeeds, and e'en a stranger recommends.
First to the queen prefer a suppliant's claim,
Alcinous' queen, Arete is her name,
The same her parents, and her power the same.
For know, from Ocean's god Nausithous sprung,
And Peribœa, beautiful and young;
(Eurymedon's last hope, who rul'd of old
The race of giants, impious, proud, and bold;
Perish'd the nation in unrighteous war,
Perish'd the prince, and left this only heir)
Who now by Neptune's amorous power compress'd,
Produc'd a monarch that his people bless'd,
Father and prince of the Phœacian name;
From him Rhexenor and Alcinous came.
The first by Phœbus' burning arrows fir'd,
New from his nuptials, hapless youth! expir'd.
No son surviv'd: Arete heir'd his state,
And her, Alcinous chose his royal mate.
With honours yet to womankind unknown,
This queen he graces, and divides the throne:
In equal tenderness her sons conspire,
And all the children emulate their sire.

When through the street she gracious deigns to move,
(The public wonder, and the public love)
The tongues of all with transport sound her praise,
The eyes of all, as on a goddess, gaze.
She feels the triumph of a generous breast,
To heal divisions, to relieve the' oppress'd;
In virtue rich; in blessing others, bless'd.
Go then secure, thy humble suit prefer,
And owe thy country and thy friends to her.'

With that the goddess deign'd no longer stay,
But o'er the world of waters wing'd her way:
Forsaking Scheria's ever-pleasing shore,
The winds to Marathon the virgin bore;
Thence, where proud Athens rears her towery head,
With opening streets and shining structures spread,
She pass'd, delighted with the well-known seats;
And to Erectheus' sacred dome retreats.

Meanwhile Ulysses at the palace waits,
There stops, and anxious with his soul debates,
Fix'd in amaze before the royal gates.
The front appear'd with radiant splendours gay,
Bright as the lamp of night, or orb of day.
The walls were massy brass: the cornice high
Blue metals crown'd, in colours of the sky:
Rich plates of gold the folding doors incase;
The pillars silver, on a brazen base;
Silver, the lintels deep-projecting o'er,
And gold, the ringlets that command the door.
Two rows of stately dogs, on either hand,
In sculptur'd gold and labour'd silver stand.
These Vulcan form'd with art divine, to wait
Immortal guardians at Alcinous' gate;
Alive each animated frame appears,
And still to live beyond the power of years.

Fair thrones within from space to space were rais'd,
Where various carpets with embroidery blaz'd,
The work of matrons: these the princes press'd,
Day following day, a long-continued feast.
Refulgent pedestals the walls surround,
Which boys of gold with flaming torches crown'd;
The polish'd ore, reflecting every ray,
Blaz'd on the banquets with a double day.
Full fifty handmaids form the household train;
Some turn the mill, or sift the golden grain;
Some ply the loom; their busy fingers move
Like poplar leaves, when Zephyr fans the grove.
Not more renown'd the men of Scheria's isle,
For sailing arts and all the naval toil,
Than works of female skill their women's pride,
The flying shuttle through the threads to guide:
Pallas to these her double gifts imparts,
Inventive genius, and industrious arts.

Close to the gates a spacious garden lies,
From storms defended, and inclement skies.
Four acres was the allotted space of ground,
Fenc'd with a green enclosure all around:
Tall thriving trees confess'd the fruitful mould;
The reddening apple ripens here to gold:
Here the blue fig with luscious juice o'erflows,
With deeper red the full pomegranate glows,
The branch here bends beneath the weighty pear,
And verdant olives flourish round the year.
The balmy spirit of the western gale
Eternal breathes on fruits untaught to fail:
Each dropping pear a following pear supplies,
On apples apples, figs on figs arise:
The same mild season gives the blooms to blow,
The buds to harden, and the fruits to grow.

Here order'd vines in equal ranks appear,
With all the' united labours of the year:
Some to unload the fertile branches run,
Some dry the blackening clusters in the sun,
Others to tread the liquid harvest join,
The groaning presses foam with floods of wine.
Here are the vines in early flower descried,
Here grapes discolour'd on the sunny side,
And there in autumn's richest purple dyed.
Beds of all various herbs, for ever green,
In beauteous order terminate the scene.
Two plenteous fountains the whole prospect crown'd;
This through the gardens leads its streams around,
Visits each plant, and waters all the ground;
While that in pipes beneath the palace flows,
And thence its current on the town bestows:
To various use their various streams they bring,
The people one, and one supplies the king.
Such were the glories which the gods ordain'd,
To grace Alcinous, and his happy land!
E'en from the chief, who men and nations knew,
The' unwonted scene surprise and rapture drew;
In pleasing thought he ran the prospect o'er,
Then hasty enter'd at the lofty door.
Night now approaching, in the palace stand,
With goblets crown'd, the rulers of the land;
Prepar'd for rest, and offering to the god
Who bears the virtue of the sleepy rod.
Unseen he glided through the joyous crowd,
With darkness circled, and an ambient cloud.
Direct to great Alcinous' throne he came,
And prostrate fell before the' imperial dame.
Then from around him drop'd the veil of night;
Sudden he shines, and manifest to sight.

The nobles gaze, with awful fear oppress'd;
Silent they gaze, and eye the godlike guest.
'Daughter of great Rhexenor! (thus began,
Low at her knees, the much-enduring man)
To thee, thy consort, and this royal train,
To all that share the blessings of your reign,
A suppliant bends! O pity human woe!
'Tis what the happy to the' unhappy owe.
A wretched exile to his country send,
Long worn with griefs, and long without a friend.
So may the gods your better days increase,
And all your joys descend on all your race;
So reign for ever on your country's breast,
Your people blessing, by your people bless'd!'
Then to the genial hearth he bow'd his face,
And humbled in the ashes took his place.
Silence ensued. The eldest first began,
Echeneus sage, a venerable man!
Whose well-taught mind the present age surpass'd;
And join'd to that the' experience of the last.
Fit words attended on his weighty sense,
And mild persuasion flow'd in eloquence.
'Oh sight, (he cried) dishonest and unjust!
A guest, a stranger, seated in the dust!
To raise the lowly suppliant from the ground
Befits a monarch. Lo! the peers around
But wait thy word, the gentle guest to grace,
And seat him fair in some distinguish'd place.
Let first the herald due libation pay
To Jove, who guides the wanderer on his way;
Then set the genial banquet in his view,
And give the stranger-guest a stranger's due.'
His sage advice the listening king obeys;
He stretch'd his hand the prudent chief to raise,

And from his seat Laodamas remov'd,
(The monarch's offspring, and his best belov'd)
There next his side the godlike hero sat;
With stars of silver shone the bed of state.
The golden ewer a beauteous handmaid brings,
Replenish'd from the cool translucent springs,
Whose polish'd vase with copious streams supplies
A silver laver, of capacious size.
The table next in regal order spread,
The glittering canisters are heap'd with bread:
Viands of various kinds invite the taste,
Of choicest sort and savour, rich repast!
Thus feasting high, Alcinous gave the sign,
And bade the herald pour the rosy wine.
'Let all around the due libation pay
To Jove, who guides the wanderer on his way.'
He said. Pontonus heard the king's command:
The circling goblet moves from hand to hand:
Each drinks the juice that glads the heart of man.
Alcinous then, with aspect mild, began:
'Princes and peers, attend! while we impart
To you the thoughts of no inhuman heart.
Now pleas'd and satiate from the social rite
Repair we to the blessings of the night:
But with the rising day, assembled here,
Let all the elders of the land appear,
Pious observe our hospitable laws,
And heaven propitiate in the stranger's cause:
Then join'd in council, proper means explore
Safe to transport him to the wish'd-for shore:
(How distant that, imports not us to know,
Nor weigh the labour, but relieve the woe)
Meantime, nor harm nor anguish let him bear:
This interval, heaven trusts him to our care;

But to his native land our charge resign'd,
Heaven's is his life to come, and all the woes behind.
Then must he suffer what the fates ordain;
For fate has wove the thread of life with pain,
And twins, e'en from the birth, are misery and man!

'But if, descended from the' Olympian bower,
Gracious approach us some immortal power;
If in that form thou com'st a guest divine,
Some high event the conscious gods design.
As yet, unbid they never grac'd our feast,
The solemn sacrifice call'd down the guest;
Then manifest of heaven the vision stood,
And to our eyes familiar was the god.
Oft with some favour'd traveller they stray,
And shine before him all the desert way:
With social intercourse, and face to face,
The friends and guardians of our pious race.
So near approach we their celestial kind,
By justice, truth, and probity of mind;
As our dire neighbours of Cyclopæan birth
Match in fierce wrong the giant-sons of earth.'

'Let no such thought (with modest grace rejoin'd
The prudent Greek) possess the royal mind.
Alas! a mortal, like thyself, am I;
No glorious native of yon azure sky:
In form, ah, how unlike their heavenly kind!
How more inferior in the gifts of mind!
Alas, a mortal! most oppress'd of those
Whom fate has loaded with a weight of woes;
By a sad train of miseries alone
Distinguish'd long, and second now to none!
By heaven's high will compell'd from shore to shore;
With heaven's high will prepar'd to suffer more.

What histories of toil could I declare?
But still long-wearied nature wants repair;
Spent with fatigue, and shrunk with pining fast,
My craving bowels still require repast.
Howe'er the noble, suffering mind, may grieve
Its load of anguish, and disdain to live;
Necessity demands our daily bread;
Hunger is insolent, and will be fed.
But finish, O ye peers! what you propose,
And let the morrow's dawn conclude my woes:
Pleas'd will I suffer all the gods ordain,
To see my soil, my son, my friends, again.
That view vouchsaf'd, let instant death surprise
With ever-during shade these happy eyes!'
The' assembled peers with general praise approv'd
His pleaded reason, and the suit he mov'd.
Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,
And to the gifts of balmy sleep repairs.
Ulysses in the regal walls alone
Remain'd: beside him, on a splendid throne,
Divine Arete and Alcinous shone.
The queen, on nearer view, the guest survey'd
Rob'd in the garments her own hands had made;
Not without wonder seen. Then thus began,
Her words addressing to the godlike man:
'Cam'st thou not hither, wondrous stranger! say,
From lands remote, and o'er a length of sea?
Tell then whence art thou? whence that princely air?
And robes like these, so recent and so fair?'
'Hard is the task, O princess! you impose,
(Thus sighing spoke the man of many woes)
The long, the mournful series to relate
Of all my sorrows, sent by heaven and fate!

Yet what you ask, attend. An island lies
Beyond these tracts, and under other skies,
Ogygia nam'd, in Ocean's watry arms;
Where dwells Calypso, dreadful in her charms!
Remote from gods or men she holds her reign,
Amid the terrors of the rolling main.
Me, only me, the hand of fortune bore,
Unbless'd! to tread that interdicted shore,
When Jove tremendous in the sable deeps
Launch'd his red lightning at our scatter'd ships:
Then, all my fleet, and all my followers lost,
Sole on a plank, on boiling surges toss'd,
Heaven drove my wreck the' Ogygian isle to find,
Full nine days floating to the wave and wind.
Met by the goddess there with open arms,
She brib'd my stay with more than human charms;
Nay promis'd, vainly promis'd, to bestow
Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.
But all her blandishments successless prove,
To banish from my breast my country's love.
I stay reluctant seven continued years,
And water her ambrosial couch with tears.
The eighth, she voluntary moves to part,
Or urg'd by Jove, or her own changeful heart.
A raft was form'd to cross the surging sea;
Herself supplied the stores and rich array;
And gave the gales to waft me on the way.
In seventeen days appear'd your pleasing coast,
And woody mountains half in vapours lost.
Joy touch'd my soul: my soul was joy'd in vain,
For angry Neptune rous'd the raging main;
The wild winds whistle, and the billows roar;
The splitting raft the furious tempest tore;
And storms vindictive intercept the shore.

Soon as their rage subsides, the seas I brave
With naked force, and shoot along the wave,
To reach this isle: but there my hopes were lost,
The surge impell'd me on a craggy coast.
I chose the safer sea, and chanc'd to find
A river's mouth, impervious to the wind,
And clear of rocks. I fainted by the flood;
Then took the shelter of the neighbouring wood.
'Twas night; and cover'd in the foliage deep,
Jove plung'd my senses in the death of sleep.
All night I slept, oblivious of my pain:
Aurora dawn'd, and Phœbus shin'd in vain,
Nor till oblique he slop'd his evening ray,
Had Somnus dried the balmy dews away.
Then female voices from the shore I heard:
A maid amidst them, goddess-like, appear'd:
To her I sued, she pitied my distress;
Like thee in beauty, nor in virtue less.
Who from such youth could hope considerate care?
In youth and beauty wisdom is but rare!
She gave me life, relief'd with just supplies
My wants, and lent these robes that strike your eyes.
This is the truth: and oh, ye powers on high!
Forbid that want should sink me to a lie.'

To this the king: 'Our daughter but express'd
Her cares imperfect to our godlike guest.
Suppliant to her, since first he chose to pray,
Why not herself did she conduct the way,
And with her handmaids to our court convey?

'Hero and king! (Ulysses thus replied)
Nor blame her, faultless, nor suspect of pride:
She bade me follow in the' attendant train;
But fear and reverence did my steps detain,

Lest rash suspicion might alarm thy mind:
Man's of a jealous and mistaking kind.'
'Far from my soul (he cried) the gods efface
All wrath ill grounded, and suspicion base!
Whate'er is honest, stranger, I approve;
And would to Phœbus, Pallas, and to Jove,
Such as thou art, thy thought and mine were one,
Nor thou unwilling to be call'd my son:
In such alliance couldst thou wish to join,
A palace stor'd with treasures should be thine.
But if reluctant, who shall force thy stay?
Jove bids to set the stranger on his way,
And ships shall wait thee with the morning ray.
Till then, let slumber close thy careful eyes;
The wakeful mariners shall watch the skies,
And seize the moment when the breezes rise:
Then gently waft thee to the pleasing shore,
Where thy soul rests, and labour is no more.
Far as Eubœa though thy country lay,
Our ships with ease transport thee in a day.
Thither of old, Earth's giant-son to view,
On wings of winds with Rhadamanth they flew:
This land, from whence their morning course begun,
Saw them returning with the setting sun.
Your eyes shall witness and confirm my tale,
Our youth how dextrous, and how fleet our sail,
When justly tim'd with equal sweep they row,
And ocean whitens in long tracks below.'
Thus he. No word the' experienc'd man replies,
But thus to heaven (and heavenward lifts his eyes):
'O Jove! O father! what the king accords
Do thou make perfect! sacred be his words!
Wide o'er the world Alcinous' glory shine;
Let fame be his, and ah! my country mine!'

Meantime Arete, for the hour of rest,
Ordains the fleecy couch, and covering vest:
Bids her fair train the purple quilts prepare,
And the thick carpets spread with busy care.
With torches blazing in their hands they pass'd,
And finish'd all their queen's command with haste:
Then gave the signal to the willing guest:
He rose with pleasure, and retir'd to rest.
There, soft-extended, to the murmuring sound
Of the high porch, Ulysses sleeps profound!
Within, releas'd from cares Alcinous lies;
And fast beside, were clos'd Arete's eyes.

END OF VOL. I.

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HOMER

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Odyssey Book IX

Painted by R. Cook. *Engraved by J. Neagle*

Published by W. Shaw by London.
Nov. 1st 1809.

THE

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THE

EIGHTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

ALCINOUS calls a council, in which it is resolved to transport Ulysses into his country. After which splendid entertainments are made, where the celebrated musician and poet Demodocus plays and sings to the guests. They next proceed to the games, the race, the wrestling, discus, &c. where Ulysses casts a prodigious length, to the admiration of all the spectators. They return again to the banquet, and Demodocus sings the loves of Mars and Venus. Ulysses, after a compliment to the poet, desires him to sing the introduction of the wooden horse into Troy; which subject provoking his tears, Alcinous inquires of his guest his name, parentage, and fortunes.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK VIII.

Now fair Aurora lifts her golden ray,
And all the ruddy orient flames with day:
Alcinous, and the chief, with dawning light,
Rose instant from the slumbers of the night;
Then to the council-seat they bend their way,
And fill the shining thrones along the bay.
  Meanwhile Minerva, in her guardian care,
Shoots from the starry vault through fields of air;
In form a herald of the king, she flies
From peer to peer, and thus incessant cries:
  'Nobles and chiefs who rule Phæacia's states,
The king in council your attendance waits:
A prince of grace divine your aid implores,
O'er unknown seas arriv'd from unknown shores.'
  She spoke, and sudden with tumultuous sounds
Of thronging multitudes the shore rebounds:
At once the seats they fill: and every eye
Gaz'd, as before some brother of the sky.
Pallas with grace divine his form improves,
More high he treads, and more enlarg'd he moves:
She sheds celestial bloom, regard to draw;
And gives a dignity of mien to awe;

With strength, the future prize of fame to play,
And gather all the honours of the day.
Then from his glittering throne Alcinous rose:
'Attend (he cried) while we our will disclose.
Your present aid this godlike stranger craves,
Tost by rude tempest through a war of waves;
Perhaps from realms that view the rising day,
Or nations subject to the western ray.
Then grant, what here all sons of woe obtain
(For here affliction never pleads in vain):
Be chosen youths prepar'd, expert to try
The vast profound, and bid the vessel fly:
Launch the tall bark, and order every oar;
Then in our court indulge the genial hour.
Instant, you sailors, to this task attend;
Swift to the palace, all ye peers ascend;
Let none to strangers honours due disclaim:
Be there Demodocus, the bard of fame,
Taught by the gods to please, when high he sings
The vocal lay, responsive to the strings.'
Thus spoke the prince: the attending peers obey,
In state they move; Alcinous leads the way:
Swift to Demodocus the herald flies,
At once the sailors to their charge arise;
They launch the vessel, and unfurl the sails,
And stretch the swelling canvass to the gales;
Then to the palace move: a gathering throng,
Youth, and white age, tumultuous pour along:
Now all accesses to the dome are filled;
Eight boars, the choicest of the herd, are kill'd:
Two beeves, twelve fatlings from the flock, they bring
To crown the feast; so wills the bounteous king.

The herald now arrives, and guides along
The sacred master of celestial song:
Dear to the Muse! who gave his days to flow
With mighty blessings, mix'd with mighty woe:
With clouds of darkness quench'd his visual ray,
But gave him skill to raise the lofty lay.
High on a radiant throne sublime in state,
Encircled by huge multitudes, he sat:
With silver shone the throne; his lyre, well strung
To rapturous sounds, at hand Pontonous hung:
Before his seat a polish'd table shines,
And a full goblet foams with generous wines:
His food a herald bore: and now they fed;
And now the rage of craving hunger fled.
Then fir'd by all the muse, aloud he sings
The mighty deeds of demigods and kings:
From that fierce wrath the noble song arose,
That made Ulysses and Achilles foes:
How o'er the feast they doom the fall of Troy;
The stern debate Atrides hears with joy:
For heaven foretold the contest, when he trod
The marble threshold of the Delphic god,
Curious to learn the counsels of the sky,
Ere yet he loos'd the rage of war on Troy.
Touch'd at the song, Ulysses straight resign'd
To soft affliction all his manly mind:
Before his eyes the purple vest he drew,
Industrious to conceal the falling dew:
But when the music paus'd, he ceas'd to shed
The flowing tear, and rais'd his drooping head:
And lifting to the gods a goblet crown'd,
He pour'd a pure libation to the ground.
Transported with the song, the listening train
Again with loud applause demand the strain:

Again Ulysses veil'd his pensive head,
Again, unmann'd, a shower of sorrow shed:
Conceal'd he wept: the king observ'd alone
The silent tear and heard the secret groan:
Then to the bard aloud: 'O cease to sing,
Dumb be thy voice, and mute the harmonious string;
Enough the feast has pleas'd, enough the pow'r
Of heavenly song has crown'd the genial hour!
Incessant in the games your strength display,
Contest, ye brave, the honours of the day!
That pleas'd the' admiring stranger may proclaim
In distant regions the Phæacian fame:
None wield the gauntlet with so dire a sway,
Or swifter in the race devour the way;
None in the leap spring with so strong a bound,
Or firmer, in the wrestling, press the ground.'
Thus spoke the king: the' attending peers obey,
In state they move; Alcinous leads the way:
His golden lyre Demodocus unstrung,
High on a column in the palace hung;
And guided by a herald's guardian cares,
Majestic to the lists of fame repairs.
Now swarms the populace; a countless throng,
Youth and hoar age; and man drives man along;
The games begin; ambitious of the prize,
Acroneus, Thoön, and Eretmeus rise;
The prize Ocyalus and Prymneus claim,
Anchialus and Ponteus, chiefs of fame:
There Proreus, Nautes, Eratreus appear,
And fam'd Amphialus, Polyneus' heir:
Euryalus, like Mars terrific, rose,
When clad in wrath he withers hosts of foes:
Naubolides with grace unequall'd shone
Or equall'd by Laodamas alone.

With these came forth Ambasineus the strong,
And three brave sons from great Alcinous sprung.
Rang'd in a line the ready racers stand,
Start from the goal, and vanish o'er the strand:
Swift as on wings of wind upborne they fly,
And drifts of rising dust involve the sky:
Before the rest, what space the hinds allow
Between the mule and ox, from plough to plough,
Clytoneus sprung: he wing'd the rapid way,
And bore the' unrivall'd honours of the day.
With fierce embrace the brawny wrestlers join:
The conquest, great Euryalus, is thine,
Amphialus sprung forward with a bound,
Superior in the leap a length of ground:
From Eratreus' strong arm the discus flies,
And sings with unmatch'd force along the skies.
And Laodam whirls high, with dreadful sway,
The gloves of death, victorious in the fray.
While thus the peerage in the games contends,
In act to speak, Laodamas ascends:
'O friends (he cries), the stranger seems well skill'd
To try the' illustrious labours of the field:
I deem him brave; then grant the brave man's claim,
Invite the hero to his share of fame.
What nervous arms he boasts? how firm his tread!
His limbs how turn'd! how broad his shoulders spread!
By age unbroke!—but all-consuming care
Destroys perhaps the strength that time would spare:
Dire is the ocean, dread in all its forms!
Man must decay, when man contends with storms.'
'Well hast thou spoke (Euryalus replies),
Thine is the guest, invite him thou to rise.'
Swift at the word advancing from the crowd
He made obeisance, and thus spoke aloud:

'Vouchsafes the reverend stranger to display
His manly worth, and share the glorious day?
Father, arise! for thee thy port proclaims
Expert to conquer in the solemn games.
To fame arise! for what more fame can yield
Than the swift race, or conflict of the field?
Steal from corroding care one transient day,
To glory give the space thou hast to stay;
Short is the time, and lo! e'en now the gales
Call thee aboard, and stretch the swelling sails.'

To whom with sighs Ulysses gave reply:
'Ah why the' ill-suiting pastime must I try?
To gloomy care my thoughts alone are free;
Ill the gay sports with troubled hearts agree:
Sad from my natal hour my days have ran,
A much-afflicted, much-enduring man!
Who suppliant to the king and peers, implores
A speedy voyage to his native shores.'

'Wide wanders, Laodam, thy erring tongue,
The sports of glory to the brave belong
(Retorts Euryalus): he boasts no claim
Among the great, unlike the sons of fame.
A wandering merchant he frequents the main,
Some mean sea-farer in pursuit of gain;
Studious of freight, in naval trade well skill'd,
But dreads the' athletic labours of the field.'

Incens'd Ulysses with a frown replies:
'O forward to proclaim thy soul unwise!
With partial hands the gods their gifts dispense:
Some greatly think, some speak with manly sense;
Here heaven an elegance of form denies,
But wisdom the defect of form supplies:
This man with energy of thought controls,
And steals with modest violence our souls,

He speaks reserv'dly, but he speaks with force,
Nor can one word be chang'd but for a worse;
In public more than mortal he appears,
And as he moves the gazing crowd reveres:
While others, beauteous as the' ethereal kind,
The nobler portion want, a knowing mind.
In outward show heaven gives thee to excel,
But heaven denies the praise of thinking well.
Ill bear the brave a rude ungovern'd tongue,
And, youth, my generous soul resents the wrong:
Skill'd in heroic exercise, I claim
A post of honour with the sons of fame:
Such was my boast while vigour crown'd my days,
Now care surrounds me, and my force decays;
Inur'd a melancholy part to bear,
In scenes of death, by tempest and by war.
Yet thus by woes impair'd, no more I wave
To prove the hero.—Slander stings the brave.'
Then striding forward with a furious bound,
He wrench'd a rocky fragment from the ground,
By far more ponderous, and more huge by far,
Than what Phæacia's sons discharg'd in air.
Fierce from his arm the' enormous load he flings;
Sonorous through the shaded air it sings:
Couch'd to the earth, tempestuous as it flies,
The crowd gaze upward while it cleaves the skies.
Beyond all marks, with many a giddy round
Down rushing, it upturns a hill of ground.
That instant Pallas, bursting from a cloud,
Fix'd a distinguish'd mark, and cried aloud:
'E'en he who sightless wants his visual ray,
May by his touch alone award the day:
Thy signal throw transcends the utmost bound
Of every champion by a length of ground;

Securely bid the strongest of the train
Arise to throw: the strongest throws in vain.'
She spoke; and momentary mounts the sky:
The friendly voice Ulysses hears with joy;
Then thus aloud, elate with decent pride:
'Rise, ye Phæacians, try your force (he cried);
If with this throw the strongest caster vie,
Still, further still, I bid the discus fly.
Stand forth, ye champions, who the gauntlet wield,
Or you, the swiftest racers of the field!
Stand forth, ye wrestlers, who these pastimes grace!
I wield the gauntlet, and I run the race.
In such heroic games I yield to none,
Or yield to brave Loadamas alone:
Shall I with brave Laodamas contend?
A friend is sacred, and I style him friend.
Ungenerous were the man, and base of heart,
Who takes the kind, and pays the' ungrateful part:
Chiefly the man, in foreign realms confin'd,
Base to his friend, to his own interest blind:
All, all your heroes I this day defy;
Give me a man, that we our might may try.
Expert in every art, I boast the skill
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill;
Should a whole host at once discharge the bow,
My well-aim'd shaft with death prevents the foe:
Alone superior in the field of Troy,
Great Philoctetes taught the shaft to fly.
From all the sons of earth unrivall'd praise
I justly claim; but yield to better days,
To those fam'd days when great Alcides rose,
And Eurytus, who bade the gods be foes:
(Vain Eurytus, whose art became his crime,
Swept from the earth he perish'd in his prime;

Sudden the' irremeable way he trod,
Who boldly durst defy the bowyer-god)
In fighting fields as far the spear I throw,
As flies an arrow from the well-drawn bow.
Sole in the race the contest I decline,
Stiff are my weary joints; and I resign,
By storms and hunger worn: age well may fail,
When storms and hunger both at once assail.'
Abash'd, the numbers hear the godlike man,
Till great Alcinous mildly thus began: [tongue
'Well hast thou spoke, and well thy generous
With decent pride refutes a public wrong:
Warm are thy words, but warm without offence;
Fear only fools, secure in men of sense:
Thy worth is known. Then hear our country's claim,
And bear to heroes our heroic fame;
In distant realms our glorious deeds display,
Repeat them frequent in the genial day;
When bless'd with ease thy woes and wanderings end,
Teach them thy consort, bid thy sons attend;
How lov'd of Jove he crown'd our sires with praise,
How we, their offspring, dignify our race.
'Let other realms the deathful gauntlet wield,
Or boast the glories of the' athletic field;
We in the course unrivall'd speed display,
Or through cærulean billows plough the way;
To dress, to dance, to sing, our sole delight,
The feast or bath by day, and love by night:
Rise then, ye skill'd in measures; let him bear
Your fame to men that breathe a distant air,
And faithful say, to you the powers belong
To race, to sail, to dance, to chaunt the song.
But, herald, to the palace swift repair,
And the soft lyre to grace our pastimes bear.'

Swift at the word, obedient to the king,
The herald flies the tuneful lyre to bring.
Up rose nine seniors, chosen to survey
The future games, the judges of the day:
With instant care they mark a spacious round,
And level for the dance the' allotted ground:
The herald bears the lyre: intent to play,
The bard advancing meditates the lay:
Skill'd in the dance, tall youths, a blooming band,
Graceful before the heavenly minstrel stand;
Light-bounding from the earth, at once they rise,
Their feet half-viewless quiver in the skies:
Ulysses gaz'd, astonish'd to survey
The glancing splendours as their sandals play.
Meantime the bard, alternate to the strings,
The loves of Mars and Cytherea sings;
How the stern god, enamour'd with her charms,
Clasp'd the gay panting goddess in his arms,
By bribes seduc'd: and how the sun whose eye
Views the broad heavens, disclos'd the lawless joy.
Stung to the soul, indignant through the skies
To his black forge vindictive Vulcan flies:
Arriv'd, his sinewy arms incessant place
The' eternal anvil on the massy base.
A wondrous net he labours, to betray
The wanton lovers, as entwin'd they lay;
Indissolubly strong! Then instant bears
To his immortal dome the finish'd snares.
Above, below, around, with art dispread,
The sure inclosure folds the genial bed;
Whose texture e'en the search of gods deceives,
Thin as the filmy threads the spider weaves.
Then, as withdrawing from the starry bow'rs,
He feigns a journey to the *Lemnian* shores,

His favourite isle! Observant Mars descries
His wish'd recess, and to the goddess flies;
He glows, he burns: the fair-hair'd queen of love
Descends smooth-gliding from the courts of Jove,
Gay blooming in full charms: her hand he press'd
With eager joy, and with a sigh address'd:
'Come, my belov'd! and taste the soft delights:
Come, to repose the genial bed invites:
Thy absent spouse, neglectful of thy charms,
Prefers his barbarous Sintians to thy arms!'
Then, nothing loth, the' enamour'd fair he led,
And sunk transported on the conscious bed.
Down rush'd the toils, inwrapping as they lay
The careless lovers in their wanton play:
In vain they strive, the' intangling snares deny
(Inextricably firm) the power to fly.
Warn'd by the god who sheds the golden day,
Stern Vulcan homeward treads the starry way:
Arriv'd, he sees, he grieves, with rage he burns;
Full horrible he roars, his voice all heaven returns:
'O Jove (he cried) O all ye powers above,
See the lewd dalliance of the queen of love!
Me, awkward me, she scorns, and yields her charms
To that fair letcher, the strong god of arms.
If I am lame, that stain my natal hour
By fate impos'd; such me my parent bore:
Why was I born? See how the wanton lies!
O sight tormenting to an husband's eyes?
But yet, I trust, this once e'en Mars would fly
His fair-one's arms—he thinks her, once, too nigh.
But there remain, ye guilty, in my power,
Till Jove refunds his shameless daughter's dower.
Too dear I pris'd a fair enchanting face;
Beauty unchaste is beauty in disgrace.'

Meanwhile the gods the dome of Vulcan throng,
Apollo comes, and Neptune comes along,
With these gay Hermes trod the starry plain;
But modesty withheld the goddess-train.
All heaven beholds, imprison'd as they lie,
And unextinguish'd laughter shakes the sky.
Then mutual, thus they spoke: 'Behold on wrong
Swift vengeance waits; and art subdues the strong!
Dwells there a god on all the' Olympian brow
More swift than Mars, and more than Vulcan slow?
Yet Vulcan conquers, and the god of arms
Must pay the penalty for lawless charms.'
Thus serious they: but he who gilds the skies,
The gay Apollo, thus to Hermes cries:
'Would'st thou enchain'd like Mars, O Hermes, lie,
And bear the shame like Mars, to share the joy?'
'O envied shame! (the smiling youth rejoin'd)
Add thrice the chains, and thrice more firmly bind;
Gaze all ye gods, and every goddess gaze,
Yet eager would I bless the sweet disgrace.'
Loud laugh the rest, e'en Neptune laughs aloud,
Yet sues importunate to loose the god:
'And free (he cries) O Vulcan! free from shame
Thy captives; I ensure the penal claim.'
'Will Neptune (Vulcan then) the faithless trust?
He suffers who gives surety for the' unjust:
But say, if that lewd scandal of the sky,
To liberty restor'd, perfidious fly;
Say, wilt thou bear the mulct?' He instant cries,
'The mulct I bear, if Mars perfidious flies.
To whom appeas'd: 'No more I urge delay!
When Neptune sues, my part is to obey.
Then to the snares his force the god applies;
They burst; and Mars to Thrace indignant flies:

To the soft Cyprian shores the goddess moves,
To visit Paphos and her blooming groves,
Where to the power an hundred altars rise,
And breathing odours scent the balmy skies:
Conceal'd she bathes in consecrated bowers,
The Graces unguents shed, ambrosial showers,
Unguents that charm the gods! she last assumes
Her wondrous robes; and full the goddess blooms.
Thus sung the bard: Ulysses hears with joy,
And loud applauses rend the vaulted sky.
Then to the sports his sons the king commands:
Each blooming youth before the monarch stands,
In dance unmatch'd! A wondrous ball is brought,
(The work of Polybus, divinely wrought)
This youth with strength enormous bids it fly,
And bending backward whirls it to the sky;
His brother springing with an active bound,
At distance intercepts it from the ground:
The ball dismiss'd, in dance they skim the strand,
Turn and return, and scarce imprint the sand.
The' assembly gazes with astonish'd eyes,
And send in shouts applauses to the skies.
Then thus Ulysses: 'Happy king, whose name
The brightest shines in all the rolls of fame:
In subjects happy! with surprise I gaze;
Thy praise was just; their skill transcends thy praise.'
Pleas'd with his people's fame the monarch hears,
And thus benevolent accosts the peers:
'Since wisdom's sacred guidance he pursues,
Give to the stranger-guest a stranger's dues:
Twelve princes in our realm dominion share,
O'er whom supreme, imperial power I bear:
Bring gold, a pledge of love; a talent bring,
A vest, a robe; and imitate your king:

Be swift to give; that he this night may share
The social feast of joy, with joy sincere.
And thou, Euryalus, redeem thy wrong:
A generous heart repairs a slanderous tongue."
The' assenting peers, obedient to the king,
In haste their heralds send the gifts to bring.
Then thus Euryalus: 'O prince, whose sway
Rules this bless'd realm, repentant I obey!
Be his this sword, whose blade of brass displays
A ruddy gleam; whose hilt, a silver blaze;
Whose ivory sheath, inwrought with curious pride,
Adds graceful terror to the wearer's side.'
He said, and to his hand the sword consign'd;
'And if (he cried) my words affect thy mind,
Far from thy mind those words, ye whirlwinds, bear,
And scatter them, ye storms, in empty air!
Crown, O ye heavens, with joy his peaceful hours,
And grant him to his spouse and native shores!'
And bless'd be thou, my friend, (Ulysses cries)
Crown him with every joy, ye favouring skies;
To thy calm hours continued peace afford,
And never, never may'st thou want this sword!'
He said, and o'er his shoulder flung the blade.
Now o'er the earth ascends the evening shade:
The precious gifts the' illustrious heralds bear,
And to the court the' embodied peers repair.
Before the queen Alcinous' sons unfold
The vests, the robes, and heaps of shining gold;
Then to the radiant thrones they move in state:
Aloft, the king in pomp imperial sat.
Thence to the queen: 'O partner of our reign,
O sole belov'd! command thy menial train
A polish'd chest and stately robes to bear,
And healing waters for the bath prepare:

That, bath'd, our guest may bid his sorrows cease,
Hear the sweet song, and taste the feast in peace.
A bowl that flames with gold, of wondrous frame,
Ourself we give, memorial of our name;
To raise in offerings to almighty Jove,
And every god that treads the courts above.'
Instant the queen, observant of the king,
Commands her train a spacious vase to bring;
The spacious vase with ample streams suffice,
Heap high the wood, and bid the flames arise.
The flames climb round it with a fierce embrace,
The fuming waters bubble o'er the blaze.
Herself the chest prepares: in order roll'd
The robes, the vests are rang'd, and heaps of gold:
And adding a rich dress inwrought with art,
A gift expressive of her bounteous heart,
Thus spoke to Ithacus: 'To guard with bands
Insolvable these gifts, thy care demands;
Lest, in thy slumbers on the watry main,
The hand of rapine make our bounty vain.'
Then bending with full force, around he roll'd
A labyrinth of bands in fold on fold,
Clos'd with Circæan art. A train attends
Around the bath: the bath the king ascends:
(Untasted joy, since that disastrous hour
He sail'd, ill-fated, from Calypso's bow'r,
Where, happy as the gods that range the sky,
He feasted every sense, with every joy)
He bathes; the damsels with officious toil
Shed sweets, shed unguents, in a shower of oil:
Then o'er his limbs a gorgeous robe he spreads,
And to the feast magnificently treads.
Full where the dome its shining valves expands,
Nausicaa blooming as a goddess stands,

With wondering eyes the hero she survey'd,
And graceful thus began the royal maid:
'Hail godlike stranger! and when heaven restores
To thy fond wish thy long-expected shores,
This, ever grateful, in remembrance bear,
To me thou ow'st, to me, the vital air.'
'O royal maid, (Ulysses straight returns)
Whose worth the splendours of thy race adorns,
So may dread Jove, whose arm in vengeance forms
The writhen bolt, and blackens heaven with storms,
Restore me safe, through weary wanderings tost,
To my dear country's ever-pleasing coast,
As while the spirit in this bosom glows,
To thee, my goddess, I address my vows:
My life, thy gift I boast!'—He said and sat,
Fast by Alcinous, on a throne of state.
Now each partakes the feast, the wine prepares,
Portions the food, and each his portion shares.
The bard an herald guides: the gazing throng
Pay low obeisance as he moves along:
Beneath a sculptur'd arch he sits enthron'd,
The peers encircling form an awful round.
Then from the chine, Ulysses carves with art,
Delicious food, an honorary part;
'This, let the master of the lyre receive,
A pledge of love! 'tis all a wretch can give.
Lives there a man beneath the spacious skies,
Who sacred honours to the bard denies?
The muse the bard inspires, exalts his mind;
The muse indulgent loves the' harmonious kind.'
The herald to his hand the charge conveys,
Not fond of flattery, nor unpleas'd with praise.
When now the rage of hunger was allay'd,
Thus to the lyrist wise Ulysses said:

'O more than man! thy soul the Muse inspires,
Or Phœbus animates with all his fires:
For who, by Phœbus uninform'd, could know
The woe of Greece, and sing so well the woe?
Just to the tale, as present at the fray,
Or taught the labours of the dreadful day!
The song recalls past horrors to my eyes,
And bids proud Ilion from her ashes rise.
Once more harmonious strike the sounding string,
The' Epæan fabric, fram'd by Pallas, sing:
How stern Ulysses, furious to destroy,
With latent heroes sack'd imperial Troy.
If faithful thou record the tale of fame,
The god himself inspires thy breast with flame:
And mine shall be the task, henceforth, to raise
In every land thy monument of praise.'
Full of the god he rais'd his lofty strain,
How the Greeks rush'd tumultuous to the main:
How blazing tents illumin'd half the skies,
While from the shores the winged navy flies:
How e'en in Ilion's walls, in deathful bands,
Came the stern Greeks by Troy's assisting hands:
All Troy up-heav'd the steed; of different mind,
Various the Trojans counsell'd; part consign'd
The monster to the sword, part sentence gave
To plunge it headlong in the whelming wave;
The' unwise award to lodge it in the towers,
An offering sacred to the' immortal powers:
The' unwise prevail, they lodge it in the walls,
And by the gods' decree proud Ilion falls;
Destruction enters in the treacherous wood,
And vengeful slaughter, fierce for human blood.
He sung the Greeks stern-issuing from the steed,
How Ilion burns, how all her fathers bleed:

How to thy dome, Deiphobus! ascends
The Spartan king; how Ithacus attends,
(Horrid as Mars) and how with dire alarms
He fights, subdues; for Pallas strings his arms.
  Thus while he sung, Ulysses' griefs renew,
Tears bathe his cheeks, and tears the ground bedew.
As some fond matron views in mortal fight
Her husband falling in his country's right:
Frantic through clashing swords she runs, she flies,
As ghastly pale he groans, and faints, and dies:
Close to his breast she grovels on the ground,
And bathes with floods of tears the gaping wound;
She cries, she shrieks; the fierce insulting foe
Relentless mocks her violence of woe:
To chains condemn'd, as wildly she deplores;
A widow, and a slave on foreign shores.
  So from the sluices of Ulysses' eyes
Fast fell the tears, and sighs succeeded sighs:
Conceal'd he griev'd: the king observ'd alone
The silent tear, and heard the secret groan:
Then to the bard aloud: 'O cease to sing,
Dumb be thy voice, and mute the tuneful string:
To every note his tears responsive flow,
And his great heart heaves with tumultuous woe;
Thy lay too deeply moves: then cease the lay,
And o'er the banquet every heart be gay:
This social right demands: for him the sails,
Floating in air, invite the' impelling gales:
His are the gifts of love: the wise and good
Receive the stranger as a brother's blood.
  'But, friend, discover faithful what I crave,
Artful concealment ill becomes the brave:
Say what thy birth, and what the name you bore,
Impos'd by parents in the natal hour?

(For from the natal hour distinctive names,
One common right, the great and lowly claims)
Say from what city, from what regions tost,
And what inhabitants those regions boast?
So shalt thou instant reach the realm assign'd,
In wondrous ships self-mov'd, instinct with mind;
No helm secures their course, no pilot guides;
Like man intelligent, they plough the tides,
Conscious of every coast and every bay,
That lies beneath the sun's all-seeing ray:
Though clouds and darkness veil the encumber'd sky,
Fearless through darkness and through clouds they fly: [main,
Though tempests rage, though rolls the swelling
The seas may roll, the tempests rage in vain;
E'en the stern god that o'er the waves presides,
Safe as they pass, and safe repass the tides,
With fury burns; while careless they convey
Promiscuous every guest to every bay.
These ears have heard my royal sire disclose
A dreadful story big with future woes:
How Neptune rag'd, and how, by his command,
Firm rooted in a surge a ship should stand
A monument of wrath: how mound on mound
Should bury these proud towers beneath the ground.
But this the gods may frustrate or fulfil,
As suits the purpose of the' eternal will.
But say through what waste regions hast thou stray'd,
What customs noted, and what coasts survey'd?
Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms?
Say why the fate of Troy awak'd thy cares,
Why heav'd thy bosom, and why flow'd thy tears?

Just are the ways of heaven: from heaven proceed
The woes of man; heav'n doom'd the Greeks to bleed,
A theme of future song! Say then if slain
Some dear-lov'd brother press'd the Phrygian plain?
Or bled some friend, who bore a brother's part,
And claim'd by merit, not by blood, the heart?

THE

NINTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE CICONS, LOTOPHAGI, AND CYCLOPS.

ULYSSES begins the relation of his adventures; how, after the destruction of Troy, he with his companions made an incursion on the Cicons, by whom they were repulsed; and meeting with a storm, were driven to the coast of the Lotophagi. From thence they sailed to the land of the Cyclops, whose manners and situation are particularly characterised. The giant Polyphemus and his cave described; the usage Ulysses and his companions met with there; and, lastly, the method and artifice by which he escaped.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK IX.

THEN thus Ulysses :—'Thou, whom first in sway,
As first in virtue, these thy realms obey;
How sweet the products of a peaceful reign!
The heaven-taught poet, and enchanting strain;
The well-fill'd palace, the perpetual feast,
A land rejoicing, and a people bless'd!
How goodly seems it, ever to employ
Man's social days in union and in joy;
The plenteous board high-heap'd with cates divine,
And o'er the foaming bowl the laughing wine!
'Amid these joys, why seeks thy mind to know
The' unhappy series of a wanderer's woe;
Remembrance sad, whose image to review,
Alas! must open all my wounds anew?
And oh, what first, what last shall I relate,
Of woes innumber'd sent by heaven and fate?
'Know first the man (though now a wretch distress'd)
Who hopes thee, monarch, for his future guest:
Behold Ulysses! no ignoble name,
Earth sounds my wisdom, and high heaven my fame.
'My native soil is Ithaca the fair,
Where high Neritus waves his woods in air:

Dulichium, Samè, and Zacynthus crown'd
With shady mountains, spread their isles around.
(These to the north and night's dark regions run,
Those to Aurora and the rising sun.)
Low lies our isle, yet bless'd in fruitful stores;
Strong are her sons, though rocky are her shores;
And none, ah none so lovely to my sight,
Of all the lands that heaven o'erspreads with light!
In vain Calypso long constrain'd my stay,
With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay;
With all her charms as vainly Circè strove,
And added magic, to secure my love.
In pomps or joys, the palace or the grot,
My country's image never was forgot,
My absent parents rose before my sight,
And distant lay contentment and delight.
'Hear then the woes, which mighty Jove ordain'd
To wait my passage from the Trojan land.
The winds from Ilion to the Cicons' shore,
Beneath cold Ismarus, our vessels bore.
We boldly landed on the hostile place,
And sack'd the city, and destroy'd the race,
Their wives made captive, their possessions shar'd,
And every soldier found a like reward.
I then advis'd to fly; not so the rest,
Who staid to revel, and prolong the feast:
The fatted sheep and sable bulls they slay,
And bowls fly round, and riot wastes the day.
Meantime the Cicons, to their holds retir'd,
Call on the Cicons, with new fury fir'd;
With early morn the gather'd country swarms,
And all the continent is bright with arms;
Thick as the budding leaves or rising flowers
O'erspread the land, when spring descends in showers:

All expert soldiers, skill'd on foot to dare,
Or from the bounding courser urge the war.
Now fortune changes (so the fates ordain),
Our hour was come to taste our share of pain.
Close at the ships the bloody fight began,
Wounded they wound, and man expires on man.
Long as the morning sun increasing bright
O'er heaven's pure azure spread the growing light,
Promiscuous death the form of war confounds,
Each adverse battle gor'd with equal wounds:
But when his evening wheels o'erhung the main,
Then conquest crown'd the fierce Ciconian train.
Six brave companions from each ship we lost,
The rest escape in haste, and quit the coast.
With sails outspread we fly the' unequal strife,
Sad for their loss, but joyful of our life.
Yet as we fled, our fellows' rites we paid,
And thrice we call'd on each unhappy shade.
'Meanwhile the god, whose hand the thunder forms,
Drives clouds on clouds, and blackens heaven with storms:
Wide o'er the waste the rage of Boreas sweeps,
And night rush'd headlong on the shaded deeps.
Now here, now there, the giddy ships are borne,
And all the rattling shrouds in fragments torn.
We furl'd the sail, we plied the labouring oar,
Took down our masts, and row'd our ships to shore.
Two tedious days and two long nights we lay,
O'erwatch'd and batter'd in the naked bay.
But the third morning when Aurora brings,
We rear the masts, we spread the canvass wings;
Refresh'd, and careless on the deck reclin'd,
We sit and trust the pilot and the wind.

Then to my native country had I sail'd;
But, the cape doubled, adverse winds prevail'd.
Strong was the tide, which, by the northern blast
Impell'd, our vessels on Cythera cast.
Nine days our fleet the' uncertain tempest bore
Far in wide ocean, and from sight of shore:
The tenth we touch'd, by various errors tost,
The land of Lotos, and the flowery coast.
We climb'd the beach, and springs of water found,
Then spread our hasty banquet on the ground.
Three men were sent, deputed from the crew,
(An herald one) the dubious coast to view,
And learn what habitants possess'd the place.
They went, and found a hospitable race;
Not prone to ill, nor strange to foreign guest,
They eat, they drink, and nature gives the feast;
The trees around them, all their fruit produce;
Lotos, the name; divine, nectareous juice!
(Thence call'd Lotophagi) which whoso tastes,
Insatiate riots in the sweet repasts,
Nor other home nor other care intends,
But quits his house, his country, and his friends:
The three we sent, from off the' enchanting ground
We dragg'd reluctant, and by force we bound;
The rest in haste forsook the pleasing shore,
Or, the charm tasted, had return'd no more.
Now plac'd in order on their banks, they sweep
The sea's smooth face, and cleave the hoary deep;
With heavy hearts we labour through the tide,
To coasts unknown, and oceans yet untried.
'The land of Cyclops first; a savage kind,
Nor tam'd by manners, nor by laws confin'd:
Untaught to plant, to turn the glebe and sow;
They all their products to free nature owe.

The soil untill'd a ready harvest yields,
With wheat and barley wave the golden fields,
Spontaneous wines from weighty clusters pour,
And Jove descends in each prolific show'r.
By these no statutes and no rights are known,
No council held, no monarch fills the throne;
But high on hills or airy cliffs they dwell,
Or deep in caves whose entrance leads to hell.
Each rules his race, his neighbour not his care,
Heedless of others, to his own severe.

'Oppos'd to the Cyclopean coasts, there lay
An isle, whose hills their subject fields survey;
Its name Lachæa, crown'd with many a grove,
Where savage goats through pathless thickets rove:
No needy mortals here, with hunger bold,
Or wretched hunters, through the wintry cold,
Pursue their flight; but leave them safe to bound
From hill to hill, o'er all the desert ground.
Nor knows the soil to feed the fleecy care,
Or feels the labours of the crooked share;
But uninhabited, untill'd, unsown
It lies, and breeds the bleating goat alone.
For there no vessel with vermilion prore,
Or bark of traffic, glides from shore to shore;
The rugged race of savages, unskill'd
The seas to traverse, or the ships to build,
Gaze on the coast, nor cultivate the soil;
Unlearn'd in all the' industrious arts of toil.
Yet here all products and all plants abound,
Sprung from the fruitful genius of the ground;
Fields waving high with heavy crops are seen,
And vines that flourish in eternal green,
Refreshing meads along the murmuring main,
And fountains streaming down the fruitful plain.

'A port there is, enclos'd on either side,
Where ships may rest, unanchor'd and untied,
Till the glad mariners incline to sail,
And the sea whitens with the rising gale.
High at its head, from out the cavern'd rock,
In living rills a gushing fountain broke:
Around it, and above, for ever green
The bushing alders form'd a shady scene.
Hither some favouring god, beyond our thought,
Through all-surrounding shade our navy brought;
For gloomy night descended on the main,
Nor glimmer'd Phœbe in the' ethereal plain:
But all unseen the clouded island lay,
And all unseen the surge and rolling sea,
Till safe we anchor'd in the shelter'd bay.
Our sails we gather'd, cast our cables o'er,
And slept secure along the sandy shore,
Soon as again the rosy morning shone,
Reveal'd the landscape and the scene unknown,
With wonder seiz'd we view the pleasing ground,
And walk delighted, and expatiate round.
Rous'd by the woodland nymphs, at early dawn,
The mountain goats came bounding o'er the lawn:
In haste our fellows to the ships repair,
For arms and weapons of the silvan war;
Straight in three squadrons all our crew we part,
And bend the bow, or wing the missile dart:
The bounteous gods afford a copious prey,
And nine fat goats each vessel bears away;
The royal bark had ten. Our ships complete
We thus supplied (for twelve were all the fleet).
'Here, till the setting sun roll'd down the light,
We sat indulging in the genial rite:

Nor wines were wanting; those from ample jars
We drain'd, the prize of our Ciconian wars.
The land of Cyclops lay in prospect near;
The voice of goats and bleating flocks we hear,
And from their mountains rising smokes appear.
Now sunk the sun, and darkness cover'd o'er
The face of things: along the sea-beat shore
Satiate we slept: but when the sacred dawn,
Arising, glitter'd o'er the dewy lawn,
I call'd my fellows, and these words address'd:
"My dear associates, here indulge your rest;
While with my single ship, adventurous, I
Go forth, the manners of yon men to try;
Whether a race unjust, of barbarous might,
Rude, and unconscious of a stranger's right;
Or such who harbour pity in their breast,
Revere the gods, and succour the distress'd."
'This said, I climb my vessel's lofty side;
My train obey'd me, and the ship untied.
In order seated on their banks, they sweep
Neptune's smooth face, and cleave the yielding deep.
When to the nearest verge of land we drew,
Fast by the sea a lonely cave we view,
High, and with darkening laurels cover'd o'er;
Where sheep and goats lay slumbering round the shore.
Near this, a fence of marble from the rock,
Brown with o'er-arching pine, and spreading oak.
A giant-shepherd here his flock maintains
Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
In shelter thick of horrid shade reclin'd;
And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind.
A form enormous! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in stature, or in face;

As some lone mountain's monstrous growth he stood,
Crown'd with rough thickets, and a nodding wood.
I left my vessel at the point of land,
And close to guard it, gave our crew command:
With only twelve, the boldest and the best,
I seek the' adventure, and forsake the rest.
Then took a goatskin fill'd with precious wine,
The gift of Maron of Evantheus' line
(The priest of Phœbus at the' Ismarian shrine).
In sacred shade his honour'd mansion stood
Amidst Apollo's consecrated wood;
Him, and his house, heaven mov'd my mind to save,
And costly presents in return he gave;
Seven golden talents to perfection wrought,
A silver bowl that held a copious draught,
And twelve large vessels of unmingled wine,
Mellifluous, undecaying, and divine!
Which now some ages from his race conceal'd,
The hoary sire in gratitude reveal'd:
Such was the wine; to quench whose fervent steam,
Scarce twenty measures from the living stream
To cool one cup suffic'd: the goblet crown'd
Breath'd aromatic fragrancies around.
Of this an ample vase we heav'd aboard,
And brought another with provisions stor'd.
My soul foreboded I should find the bower
Of some fell monster, fierce with barbarous power,
Some rustic wretch, who liv'd in heaven's despite,
Contemning laws, and trampling on the right.
The cave we found, but vacant all within
(His flock the giant tended on the green);
But round the grot we gaze; and all we view,
In order rang'd, our admiration drew:

The bending shelves with loads of cheeses press'd,
The folded flocks each separate from the rest
(The larger here, and there the lesser lambs,
The new-fall'n young here bleating for their dams;
The kid distinguish'd from the lambkin lies):
The cavern echoes with responsive cries.
Capacious chargers all around were laid,
Full pails, and vessels of the milking trade.
With fresh provisions hence our fleet to store
My friends advise me, and to quit the shore;
Or drive a flock of sheep and goats away,
Consult our safety, and put off to sea.
Their wholesome counsel rashly I declin'd,
Curious to view the man of monstrous kind,
And try what social rites a savage lends:
Dire rites, alas! and fatal to my friends!
'Then first a fire we kindle, and prepare
For his return with sacrifice and pray'r.
The loaden shelves afford us full repast;
We sit expecting. Lo! he comes at last.
Near half a forest on his back he bore,
And cast the pondrous burden at the door.
It thunder'd as it fell. We trembled then,
And sought the deep recesses of the den.
Now driven before him, through the arching rock,
Came tumbling, heaps on heaps, the' unnumber'd flock;
Big-udder'd ewes, and goats of female kind
(The males were penn'd in outward courts behind).
Then, heav'd on high, a rock's enormous weight
To the cave's mouth he roll'd, and clos'd the gate.
(Scarce twenty four-wheel'd cars, compact and strong,
The massy load could bear, or roll along).

He next betakes him to his evening cares,
And, sitting down, to milk his flocks prepares;
Of half their udders eases first the dams,
Then to the mother's teat submits the lambs.
Half the white stream to hardening cheese he press'd,
And high in wicker-baskets heap'd: the rest,
Reserv'd in bowls, supplied the nightly feast.
His labour done, he fir'd the pile that gave
A sudden blaze, and lighted all the cave.
We stand discover'd by the rising fires;
Askance the giant glares, and thus inquires:
"What are ye, guests; on what adventure, say,
Thus far ye wander through the watery way?
Pirates, perhaps, who seek through seas unknown
The lives of others, and expose your own?"
'His voice like thunder through the cavern sounds:
My bold companions thrilling fear confounds,
Appall'd at sight of more than mortal man!
At length, with heart recover'd, I began:
"From Troy's fam'd fields, sad wanderers o'er the main,
Behold the relics of the Grecian train!
Through various seas by various perils toss'd,
And forc'd by storms, unwilling, on your coast;
Far from our destin'd course, and native land,
Such was our fate, and such high Jove's command!
Nor what we are befits us to disclaim,
Atrides' friends (in arms a mighty name),
Who taught proud Troy and all her sons to bow;
Victors of late, but humble suppliants now!
Low at thy knee thy succour we implore;
Respect us, human, and relieve us, poor.
At least some hospitable gift bestow;
'Tis what the happy to the' unhappy owe:

'Tis what the gods require: those gods revere,
The poor and stranger are their constant care;
To Jove their cause and their revenge belongs,
He wanders with them, and he feels their wrongs."
" Fools that ye are! (the savage thus replies,
His inward fury blazing at his eyes)
Or strangers, distant far from our abodes,
To bid me reverence or regard the gods.
Know then we Cyclops are a race, above
Those air-bred people, and their goat-nurs'd Jove:
And learn, our power proceeds with thee and thine,
Not as he wills, but as ourselves incline.
But answer, the good ship that brought ye o'er,
Where lies she anchor'd? near or off the shore?"
' Thus he. His meditated fraud I find,
(Vers'd in the turns of various humankind)
And, cautious, thus: " Against a dreadful rock,
Fast by your shore the gallant vessel broke:
Scarce with these few I 'scap'd; of all my train,
Whom angry Neptune whelm'd beneath the main;
The scatter'd wreck the winds blew back again."
' He answer'd with his deed. His bloody hand
Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band,
And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor:
The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore.
Torn limb from limb, he spreads his horrid feast,
And fierce devours it like a mountain beast:
He sucks the marrow, and the blood he drains,
Nor entrails, flesh, nor solid bone remains.
We see the death from which we cannot move,
And humbled groan beneath the hand of Jove.
His ample maw with human carnage fill'd,
A milky deluge next the giant swill'd;

Then stretch'd in length o'er half the cavern'd rock,
Lay senseless, and supine, amidst the flock.
To seize the time, and with a sudden wound
To fix the slumbering monster to the ground,
My soul impels me; and in act I stand
To draw the sword; but wisdom held my hand.
A deed so rash had finish'd all our fate;
No mortal forces from the lofty gate
Could roll the rock. In hopeless grief we lay,
And sigh, expecting the return of day.
'Now did the rosy-finger'd morn arise,
And shed her sacred light along the skies.
He wakes, he lights the fire, he milks the dams,
And to the mother's teat submits the lambs.
The task thus finish'd of his morning hours,
Two more he snatches, murders, and devours.
Then, pleas'd and whistling, drives his flock before;
Removes the rocky mountain from the door,
And shuts again: with equal ease dispos'd,
As a light quiver's lid is op'd and clos'd.
His giant voice the echoing region fills:
His flocks, obedient, spread o'er all the hills.
'Thus left behind, e'en in the last despair,
I thought, devis'd, and Pallas heard my pray'r.
Revenge, and doubt, and caution work'd my breast;
But this of many counsels seem'd the best:
The monster's club within the cave I spied,
A tree of stateliest growth, and yet undried,
Green from the wood; of height and bulk so vast,
The largest ship might claim it for a mast.
This, shorten'd of its top, I gave my train
A fathom's length, to shape it and to plane;
The narrower end I sharpen'd to a spire;
Whose point we harden'd with the force of fire,

And hid it in the dust that strow'd the cave.
Then to my few companions, bold and brave,
Propos'd, who first the venturous deed should try,
In the broad orbit of his monstrous eye
To plunge the brand, and twirl the pointed wood,
When slumber next should tame the man of blood.
Just as I wish'd, the lots were cast on four:
Myself the fifth. We stand and wait the hour.
He comes with evening: all his fleecy flock
Before him march, and pour into the rock;
Not one, or male or female, stay'd behind:
(So fortune chanc'd, or so some god design'd)
Then heaving high the stone's unwieldy weight,
He roll'd it on the cave, and clos'd the gate.
First down he sits, to milk the woolly dams,
And then permits their udder to the lambs.
Next seiz'd two wretches more, and headlong cast,
Brain'd on the rock; his second dire repast.
I then approach'd him reeking with their gore,
And held the brimming goblet foaming o'er:
"Cyclop! since human flesh has been thy feast,
Now drain this goblet, potent to digest:
Know hence what treasures in our ship we lost,
And what rich liquors other climates boast.
We to thy shore the precious freight shall bear,
If home thou send us, and vouchsafe to spare.
But oh! thus furious, thirsting thus for gore,
The sons of men shall ne'er approach thy shore,
And never shalt thou taste this nectar more."
'He heard, he took, and pouring down his throat
Delighted, swill'd the large luxurious draught.
"More! give me more! (he cried) the boon be thine,
Whoe'er thou art, that bear'st celestial wine!

Declare thy name; not mortal is this juice,
Such as the' unbless'd Cyclopean climes produce,
(Though sure our vine the largest cluster yields,
And Jove's scorn'd thunder serves to drench our fields)
But this descended from the bless'd abodes,
A rill of nectar, streaming from the gods."
'He said, and greedy grasp'd the heady bowl,
Thrice drain'd, and pour'd the deluge on his soul.
His sense lay cover'd with the dozy fume;
While thus my fraudful speech I reassume:
"Thy promis'd boon, O Cyclop! now I claim,
And plead my title: Noman is my name.
By that distinguish'd from my tender years,
'Tis what my parents call me, and my peers."
'The giant then: "Our promis'd grace receive,
The hospitable boon we mean to give:
When all thy wretched crew have felt my pow'r,
Noman shall be the last I will devour."
'He said: then nodding with the fumes of wine
Drop'd his huge head, and snoring lay supine.
His neck obliquely o'er his shoulders hung, [strong!
Press'd with the weight of sleep that tames the
There belch'd the mingled steams of wine and blood,
And human flesh, his indigested food.
Sudden I stir the embers, and inspire
With animating breath the seeds of fire;
Each drooping spirit with bold words repair,
And urge my train the dreadful deed to dare.
The stake now glow'd beneath the burning bed
(Green as it was) and sparkled fiery red.
Then forth the vengeful instrument I bring;
With beating hearts my fellows form a ring.

Urg'd by some present god, they swift let fall
The pointed torment on his visual ball.
Myself above them from a rising ground
Guide the sharp stake, and twirl it round and round.
As when a shipwright stands his workmen o'er,
Who ply the wimble, some huge beam to bore;
Urg'd on all hands it nimbly spins about,
The grain deep-piercing till it scoops it out:
In his broad eye so whirls the fiery wood;
From the pierc'd pupil spouts the boiling blood;
Sing'd are his brows; the scorching lids grow black;
The gelly bubbles, and the fibres crack.
And as when armourers temper in the ford
The keen-edg'd pole-ax, or the shining sword,
The red-hot metal hisses in the lake:
Thus in his eye-ball hiss'd the plunging stake.
He sends a dreadful groan: the rocks around
Through all their inmost winding caves resound.
Scar'd we receded. Forth, with frantic hand,
He tore and dash'd on earth the gory brand:
Then calls the Cyclops, all that round him dwell,
With voice like thunder, and a direful yell.
From all their dens the one-ey'd race repair,
From rifted rocks, and mountains bleak in air.
All haste assembled, at his well-known roar,
Inquire the cause, and crowd the cavern door.
"What hurts thee, Polypheme? what strange affright
Thus breaks our slumbers, and disturbs the night?
Does any mortal in the' unguarded hour
Of sleep oppress thee, or by fraud or pow'r?
Or thieves insidious the fair flock surprise?"
Thus they. The Cyclop from his den replies:

" Friends, Noman kills me; Noman in the hour
Of sleep oppresses me with fraudful pow'r."
" If no man hurt thee, but the hand divine
Inflict disease, it fits thee to resign:
To Jove or to thy father Neptune pray,"
The brethren cried, and instant strode away.
' Joy touch'd my secret soul and conscious heart,
Pleas'd with the' effect of conduct and of art.
Meantime the Cyclop, raging with his wound,
Spreads his wide arms, and searches round and round:
At last, the stone removing from the gate,
With hands extended in the midst he sate;
And search'd each passing sheep, and felt it o'er,
Secure to seize us ere we reach'd the door.
(Such as his shallow wit, he deem'd was mine)
But secret I revolv'd the deep design;
Twas for our lives my labouring bosom wrought;
Each scheme I turn'd, and sharpen'd every thought;
This way and that, I cast, to save my friends,
Till one resolve my varying counsel ends.
' Strong were the rams, with native purple fair,
Well fed, and largest of the fleecy care.
These three and three, with osier bands we tied;
(The twining bands the Cyclop's bed supply'd)
The midmost bore a man; the outward two
Secur'd each side: so bound we all the crew.
One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock;
In his deep fleece my grasping hands I lock,
And fast beneath, in woolly curls inwove,
There cling implicit, and confide in Jove.
When rosy morning glimmer'd o'er the dales,
He drove to pasture all the lusty males:

The ewes still folded, with distended thighs
Unmilk'd, lay bleating in distressful cries.
But heedless of those cares, with anguish stung,
He felt their fleeces as they pass'd along:
(Fool that he was) and let them safely go,
All unsuspecting of their freight below.

'The master ram at last approach'd the gate,
Charg'd with his wool, and with Ulysses' fate.
Him, while he pass'd, the monster blind bespoke:
"What makes my ram the lag of all the flock?
First thou wert wont to crop the flowery mead,
First to the field and river's bank to lead,
And first with stately step at evening hour
Thy fleecy fellows usher to their bow'r.
Now far the last, with pensive pace and slow
Thou mov'st, as conscious of thy master's woe!
Seest thou these lids that now unfold in vain?
(The deed of Noman and his wicked train)
Oh! didst thou feel for thy afflicted lord,
And would but fate the power of speech afford;
Soon might'st thou tell me, where in secret here
The dastard lurks, all trembling with his fear: [rock,
Swung round and round, and dash'd from rock to
His batter'd brains should on the pavement smoke.
No ease, no pleasure my sad heart receives,
While such a monster as vile Noman lives."

'The giant spoke, and through the hollow rock
Dismiss'd the ram, the father of the flock.
No sooner freed, and through the enclosure past,
First I release myself, my fellows last:
Fat sheep and goats in throngs we drive before,
And reach our vessel on the winding shore.
With joy the sailors view their friends return'd,
And hail us living whom as dead they mourn'd.

Big tears of transport stand in every eye:
I check their fondness, and command to fly.
Aboard in haste they heave the wealthy sheep,
And snatch their oars, and rush into the deep.
'Now off at sea, and from the shallows clear,
As far as human voice could reach the ear;
With taunts the distant giant I accost,
"Hear me, O Cyclop! hear, ungracious host!
'Twas on no coward, no ignoble slave,
Thou meditat'st thy meal in yonder cave;
But one, the vengeance fated from above
Doom'd to inflict; the instrument of Jove.
Thy barbarous breach of hospitable bands,
The god, the god revenges by my hands."
'These words the Cyclop's burning rage provoke:
From the tall hill he rends a pointed rock;
High o'er the billows flew the massy load,
And near the ship came thundering on the flood.
It almost brush'd the helm, and fell before:
The whole sea shook, and refluent beat the shore.
The strong concussion on the heaving tide
Roll'd back the vessel to the island's side:
Again I shov'd her off; our fate to fly,
Each nerve we stretch, and every oar we ply.
Just 'scap'd impending death, when now again
We twice as far had furrow'd back the main,
Once more I raise my voice; my friends afraid
With mild entreaties my design dissuade:
"What boots the godless giant to provoke,
Whose arm may sink us at a single stroke?
Already, when the dreadful rock he threw,
Old Ocean shook, and back his surges flew.
The sounding voice directs his aim again;
The rock o'erwhelms us, and we 'scap'd in vain."

'But I, of mind elate, and scorning fear,
Thus with new taunts insult the monster's ear:
"Cylop! if any, pitying thy disgrace,
Ask who disfigur'd thus that eyeless face?
Say 'twas Ulysses; 'twas his deed, declare,
Laertes' son, of Ithaca the fair;
Ulysses, far in fighting fields renown'd,
Before whose arm Troy tumbled to the ground."
'The' astonish'd savage with a roar replies:
"O heavens! O faith of ancient prophecies!
This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold,
(The mighty seer who on these hills grew old;
Skill'd the dark fates of mortals to declare,
And learn'd in all wing'd omens of the air)
Long since he menac'd, such was fate's command;
And nam'd Ulysses as the destin'd hand.
I deem'd some godlike giant to behold,
Or lofty hero, haughty, brave, and bold;
Not this weak pigmy-wretch, of mean design,
Who not by strength subdued me, but by wine.
But come, accept our gifts, and join to pray
Great Neptune's blessing on the watery way:
For his I am, and I the lineage own:
The' immortal father no less boasts the son.
His power can heal me, and re-light my eye;
And only his, of all the gods on high."
"Oh! could this arm (I thus aloud rejoin'd)
From that vast bulk dislodge thy bloody mind,
And send thee howling to the realms of night!
As sure, as Neptune cannot give thee sight."
'Thus I: while raging he repeats his cries,
With hands uplifted to the starry skies:
"Hear me, O Neptune! thou whose arms are hurl'd
From shore to shore, and gird the solid world.

If thine I am, nor thou my birth disown,
And if the' unhappy Cyclop be thy son;
Let not Ulysses breathe his native air,
Laertes' son, of Ithaca the fair.
If to review his country be his fate,
Be it through toils and sufferings, long and late;
His lost companions let him first deplore;
Some vessel, not his own, transport him o'er;
And when at home from foreign sufferings freed,
More near and deep, domestic woes succeed!"
'With imprecations thus he fill'd the air,
And angry Neptune heard the' unrighteous prayer.
A larger rock then heaving from the plain,
He whirl'd it round: it sung across the main;
It fell, and brush'd the stern: the billows roar,
Shake at the weight, and refluent beat the shore.
With all our force we kept aloof to sea,
And gain'd the island where our vessels lay.
Our sight the whole collected navy cheer'd,
Who, waiting long, by turns had hop'd and fear'd.
There disembarking on the green sea-side,
We land our cattle, and the spoil divide:
Of these due shares to every sailor fall;
The master ram was voted mine by all:
And him (the guardian of Ulysses' fate)
With pious mind to heaven I consecrate.
But the great god, whose thunder rends the skies,
Averse, beholds the smoking sacrifice;
And sees me wandering still from coast to coast,
And all my vessels, all my people, lost!
'While thoughtless we indulge the genial rite,
As plenteous cates and flowing bowls invite;
Till evening Phœbus roll'd away the light:

Stretch'd on the shore in careless ease we rest,
Till ruddy morning purpled o'er the east.
Then from their anchors all our ships unbind,
And mount the decks, and call the willing wind.
Now rang'd in order on our banks, we sweep
With hasty strokes the hoarse-resounding deep;
Blind to the future, pensive with our fears,
Glad for the living, for the dead in tears.'

THE

TENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

ADVENTURES WITH ÆOLUS, THE LÆSTRIGONS, AND CIRCE.

ULYSSES arrives at the island of Æolus, who gives him prosperous winds, and incloses the adverse ones in a bag, which his companions untying, they are driven back again, and rejected. Then they sail to the Læstrigons, where they lose eleven ships, and, with one only remaining, proceed to the island of Circe. Eurylochus is sent first with some companions, all which, except Eurylochus, are transformed into swine. Ulysses then undertakes the adventure, and by the help of Mercury, who gives him the herb Moly, overcomes the enchantress, and procures the restoration of his men. After a year's stay with her, he prepares at her instigation for his voyage to the infernal shades.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK X.

'At length we reach'd Æolia's sea-girt shore,
Where great Hippotades the sceptre bore;
A floating isle! High-rais'd by toil divine,
Strong walls of brass the rocky coast confine.
Six blooming youths, in private grandeur bred,
And six fair daughters, grac'd the royal bed:
These sons their sisters wed, and all remain
Their parents' pride, and pleasure of their reign.
All day they feast, all day the bowls fly round,
And joy and music through the isle resound:
At night each pair on splendid carpets lay,
And crown'd with love the pleasures of the day.
'This happy port affords our wandering fleet
A month's reception, and a safe retreat.
Full oft the monarch urg'd me to relate
The fall of Ilion, and the Grecian fate;
Full oft I told: at length for parting mov'd;
The king with mighty gifts my suit approv'd.
The adverse winds in leathern bags he brac'd,
Compress'd their force, and lock'd each struggling [blast:
For him the mighty sire of gods assign'd
The tempest's lord, the tyrant of the wind;

His word alone the listening storms obey,
To smooth the deep, or swell the foamy sea.
These in my hollow ship the monarch hung,
Securely fetter'd by a silver thong;
But Zephyrus exempt, with friendly gales
He charg'd to fill, and guide the swelling sails:
Rare gift! but oh, what gift to fools avails?
'Nine prosperous days we plied the labouring oar;
The tenth presents our welcome native shore:
The hills display the beacon's friendly light,
And rising mountains gain upon our sight.
Then first my eyes, by watchful toils oppress'd,
Complied to take the balmy gifts of rest;
Then first my hands did from the rudder part,
(So much the love of home possess'd my heart)
When lo! on board a fond debate arose;
What rare device those vessels might enclose?
What sum, what prize from Æolus I brought?
Whilst to his neighbour each express'd his thought:
'Say, whence, ye gods, contending nations strive
Who most shall please, who most our hero give?
Long have his coffers groan'd with Trojan spoils;
Whilst we, the wretched partners of his toils,
Reproach'd by want, our fruitless labours mourn,
And only rich in barren fame return.
Now Æolus, ye see, augments his store;
But come, my friends, these mystic gifts explore.'
They said: and (oh curs'd fate!) the thongs unbound!
The gushing tempest sweeps the ocean round;
Snatch'd in the whirl, the hurried navy flew,
The ocean widen'd, and the shores withdrew.
Rous'd from my fatal sleep, I long debate
If still to live, or desperate plunge to fate:

Thus doubting, prostrate on the deck I lay,
Till all the coward thoughts of death gave way.
'Meanwhile our vessels plough the liquid plain,
And soon the known Æolian coast regain,
Our groans the rocks remurmur'd to the main.
We leap'd on shore, and with a scanty feast
Our thirst and hunger hastily repress'd;
That done, two chosen heralds straight attend
Our second progress to my royal friend;
And him amidst his jovial sons we found;
The banquet steaming, and the goblets crown'd:
There humbly stopp'd with conscious shame and awe,
Nor nearer than the gate presum'd to draw.
But soon his sons their well-known guest descried,
And starting from their couches loudly cried:
'Ulysses here! what dæmon couldst thou meet
To thwart thy passage and repel thy fleet?
Wast thou not furnish'd by our choicest care
For Greece, for home, and all thy soul held dear?'
Thus they; in silence long my fate I mourn'd,
At length these words with accent low return'd:
'Me, lock'd in sleep, my faithless crew bereft
Of all the blessings of your godlike gift!
But grant, O grant our loss we may retrieve:
A favour you, and you alone can give.'
'Thus I with art to move their pity tried,
And touch'd the youths; but their stern sire replied:
Vile wretch, be gone! this instant I command
Thy fleet accurs'd to leave our hallow'd land.
His baneful suit pollutes these bless'd abodes,
Whose fate proclaims him hateful to the gods.'
'Thus fierce he said: we sighing went our way,
And with desponding hearts put off to sea.

The sailors spent with toils their folly mourn,
But mourn in vain; no prospect of return.
Six days and nights a doubtful course we steer,
The next proud Lamos' stately towers appear,
And Læstrigonia's gates arise distinct in air.
The shepherd quitting here at night the plain,
Calls, to succeed his cares, the watchful swain:
But he that scorns the chains of sleep to wear,
And adds the herdsman's to the shepherd's care,
So near the pastures, and so short the way,
His double toils may claim a double pay,
And join the labours of the night and day.

'Within a long recess a bay there lies,
Edg'd round with cliffs, high pointing to the skies;
The jutting shores that swell on either side
Contract its mouth, and break the rushing tide.
Our eager sailors seize the fair retreat,
And bound within the port their crowded fleet:
For here retir'd the sinking billows sleep,
And smiling calmness silver'd o'er the deep.
I only in the bay refus'd to moor,
And fix'd, without, my halsers to the shore.

'From thence we climb'd a point, whose airy brow
Commands the prospect of the plains below:
No tracks of beasts, or signs of men, we found,
But smoky volumes rolling from the ground.
Two with our herald thither we command,
With speed to learn what men possess'd the land.
They went, and kept the wheel's smooth beaten road
Which to the city drew the mountain wood;
When lo! they met, beside a crystal spring,
The daughter of Antiphates the king;
She to Artacia's silver streams came down
(Artacia's streams alone supply the town):

The damsel they approach, and ask'd what race
The people were? who monarch of the place?
With joy the maid the' unwary strangers heard,
And show'd them where the royal dome appear'd.
They went; but as they entering saw the queen
Of size enormous, and terrific mien,
(Not yielding to some bulky mountain's height)
A sudden horror struck their aching sight.
Swift at her call her husband scour'd away
To wreak his hunger on the destin'd prey:
One for his food the raging glutton slew,
But two rush'd out, and to the navy flew.
'Balk'd of his prey, the yelling monster flies,
And fills the city with his hideous cries;
A ghastly band of giants hear the roar,
And pouring down the mountains, crowd the shore.
Fragments they rend from off the craggy brow,
And dash the ruins on the ships below:
The crackling vessels burst; hoarse groans arise,
And mingled horrors echo to the skies!
The men, like fish, they stuck upon the flood,
And cram'd their filthy throats with human food.
Whilst thus their fury rages at the bay,
My sword our cables cut, I call'd to weigh;
And charg'd my men, as they from fate would fly,
Each nerve to strain, each bending oar to ply.
The sailors catch the word, their oars they seize,
And sweep with equal strokes the smoky seas;
Clear of the rocks the' impatient vessel flies;
Whilst in the port each wretch encumber'd dies.
With earnest haste my frighted sailors press,
While kindling transports glow'd at our success;
But the sad fate that did our friends destroy
Cool'd every breast, and damp'd the rising joy.

'New drop'd our anchors in the' Ægean bay,
Where Circe dwelt, the daughter of the day;
Her mother Persè, of old Ocean's strain:
Thus from the sun descended, and the main;
(From the same lineage stern Ætes came,
The far-fam'd brother of the' enchantress dame)
Goddess, and queen, to whom the powers belong
Of dreadful magic, and commanding song,
Some god directing, to this peaceful bay
Silent we came, and melancholy lay, [on,
Spent and o'erwatch'd. Two days and nights roll'd
And now the third succeeding morning shone.
I climb'd a cliff with spear and sword in hand,
Whose ridge o'erlook'd a shady length of land;
To learn if aught of mortal works appear,
Or cheerful voice of mortal strike the ear!
From the high point I mark'd, in distant view,
A stream of curling smoke, ascending blue,
And spiry tops, the tufted trees above,
Of Circe's palace bosom'd in the grove.

'Thither to haste, the region to explore,
Was first my thought: but speeding back to shore
I deem'd it best to visit first my crew,
And send out spies the dubious coast to view.
As down the hill I solitary go,
Some power divine who pities human woe
Sent a tall stag, descending from the wood,
To cool his fervour in the crystal flood;
Luxuriant on the wave-worn bank he lay,
Stretch'd forth, and panting in the sunny ray.
I launch'd my spear, and with a sudden wound
Transpierc'd his back, and fix'd him to the ground.
He falls, and mourns his fate with human cries:
Through the wide wound the vital spirit flies.

I drew, and casting on the river side
The bloody spear, his gather'd feet I tied
With twining osiers which the bank supplied.
An ell in length the pliant wisp I weav'd,
And the huge body on my shoulders heav'd:
Then leaning on the spear with both my hands,
Upbore my load, and press'd the sinking sands
With weighty steps, till at the ship I threw
The welcome burden, and bespoke my crew:
'Cheer up, my friends! it is not yet our fate
To glide with ghosts through Pluto's gloomy gate.
Food in the desert land, behold! is given,
Live, and enjoy the providence of heaven.'
'The joyful crew survey his mighty size,
And on the future banquet feast their eyes,
As huge in length extended lay the beast;
Then wash their hands, and hasten to the feast.
There till the setting sun roll'd down the light,
They sat indulging in the genial rite.
When evening rose, and darkness cover'd o'er
The face of things, we slept along the shore.
But when the rosy morning warm'd the east,
My men I summon'd, and these words address'd:
'Followers and friends; attend what I propose:
Ye sad companions of Ulysses' woes!
We know not here what land before us lies,
Or to what quarter now we turn our eyes,
Or where the sun shall set, or where shall rise.
Here let us think (if thinking be not vain)
If any counsel, any hope remain.
Alas! from yonder promontory's brow,
I view'd the coast, a region flat and low;
An isle encircled with the boundless flood;
A length of thickets, and entangled wood.

Some smoke I saw amid the forest rise,
And all around it only seas and skies!'
'With broken hearts my sad companions stood,
Mindful of Cyclops and his human food,
And horrid Læstrigons, the men of blood.
Presaging tears apace began to rain;
But tears in mortal miseries are vain.
In equal parts I straight divide my band,
And name a chief each party to command.
I led the one, and of the other side
Appointed brave Eurylochus the guide.
Then in the brazen helm the lots we throw,
And fortune casts Eurylochus to go:
He march'd, with twice eleven in his train:
Pensive they march, and pensive we remain.
'The palace in a woody vale they found,
High rais'd of stone; a shaded space around:
Where mountain wolves and brindled lions roam,
(By magic tam'd) familiar to the dome.
With gentle blandishment our men they meet,
And wag their tails, and fawning lick their feet.
As from some feast a man returning late,
His faithful dogs all meet him at the gate,
Rejoicing round, some morsel to receive
(Such as the good man ever us'd to give):
Domestic thus the grisly beasts drew near:
They gaze with wonder, not unmix'd with fear.
Now on the threshold of the dome they stood,
And heard a voice resounding through the wood:
Plac'd at her loom within, the goddess sung;
The vaulted roofs and solid pavement rung.
O'er the fair web the rising figures shine,
Immortal labour! worthy hands divine.

Polites to the rest the question mov'd
(A gallant leader, and a man I lov'd):
'What voice celestial, chanting to the loom,
Or nymph or goddess, echoes from the room?
Say shall we seek access? With that they call;
And wide unfold the portals of the hall.
'The goddess, rising, asks her guests to stay,
Who blindly follow where she leads the way.
Eurylochus alone of all the band,
Suspecting fraud, more prudently remain'd.
On thrones around with downy coverings grac'd,
With semblance fair the' unhappy men she plac'd.
Milk newly press'd, the sacred flour of wheat,
And honey fresh, and Pramnian wines, the treat:
But venom'd was the bread, and mix'd the bowl,
With drugs of force to darken all the soul:
Soon in the luscious feast themselves they lost,
And drank oblivion of their native coast.
Instant her circling wand the goddess waves,
To hogs transforms them, and the sty receives.
No more was seen the human form divine;
Head, face, and members bristle into swine:
Still curs'd with sense, their minds remain alone,
And their own voice affrights them when they groan.
Meanwhile the goddess in disdain bestows
The mast and acorn, brutal food! and strows
The fruits of cornel, as their feast around;
Now prone and groveling on unsavoury ground.
'Eurylochus with pensive steps and slow,
Aghast returns; the messenger of woe,
And bitter fate. To speak he made essay,
In vain essay'd, nor would his tongue obey,
His swelling heart denied the words their way:

But speaking tears the want of words supply,
And the full soul bursts copious from his eye.
Affrighted, anxious for our fellows' fates,
We press to hear what sadly he relates.
'We went, Ulysses! (such was thy command)
Through the lone thicket, and the desert land.
A palace in a woody vale we found
Brown with dark forests, and with shades around.
A voice celestial echoed from the dome,
Or nymph, or goddess, chanting to the loom.
Access we sought, nor was access denied:
Radiant she came; the portals open'd wide:
The goddess mild invites the guests to stay:
They blindly follow where she leads the way.
I only wait behind, of all the train:
I waited long, and ey'd the doors in vain:
The rest are vanish'd, none repass'd the gate;
And not a man appears to tell their fate.'
'I heard, and instant o'er my shoulders flung
The belt in which my weighty falchion hung;
(A beamy blade) then seiz'd the bended bow,
And bade him guide the way, resolv'd to go.
He, prostrate falling, with both hands embrac'd
My knees, and weeping thus his suit address'd:
'O king belov'd of Jove! thy servant spare,
And ah, thyself the rash attempt forbear!
Never, alas! thou never shalt return,
Or see the wretched for whose loss we mourn.
With what remains from certain ruin fly,
And save the few not fated yet to die.'
'I answer'd stern: 'Inglorious then remain,
Here feast and loiter, and desert thy train.
Alone, unfriended, will I tempt my way;
The laws of fate compel, and I obey.'

'This said, and scornful turning from the shore
My haughty step, I stalk'd the valley o'er.
Till now approaching nigh the magic bower,
Where dwelt the' enchantress skill'd in herbs of power;
A form divine forth issued from the wood,
(Immortal Hermes with the golden rod)
In human semblance. On his bloomy face
Youth smil'd celestial, with each opening grace.
He seiz'd my hand, and gracious thus began:
"Ah, whither roam'st thou? much-enduring man!
O blind to fate! what led thy steps to rove
The horrid mazes of this magic grove?
Each friend you seek in yon enclosure lies,
All lost their form, and habitants of styes.
Think'st thou by wit to model their escape?
Sooner shalt thou, a stranger to thy shape,
Fall prone their equal: first thy danger know,
Then take the antidote the gods bestow.
The plant I give through all the direful bow'r
Shall guard thee, and avert the evil hour.
Now hear her wicked arts. Before thy eyes
The bowl shall sparkle, and the banquet rise;
Take this, nor from the faithless feast abstain,
For temper'd drugs and poisons shall be vain.
Soon as she strikes her wand, and gives the word,
Draw forth and brandish thy refulgent sword,
And menace death: those menaces shall move
Her alter'd mind to blandishment and love.
Nor shun the blessing proffer'd to thy arms;
Ascend her bed, and taste celestial charms:
So shall thy tedious toils a respite find,
And thy lost friends return to human kind.

That in the tripod o'er the kindled pile
The water pours; the bubbling waters boil:
An ample vase receives the smoking wave;
And, in the bath prepar'd, my limbs I lave:
Reviving sweets repair the mind's decay,
And take the painful sense of toil away.
A vest and tunic o'er me next she threw,
Fresh from the bath and dropping balmy dew;
Then led and plac'd me on the sovereign seat,
With carpets spread; a footstool at my feet.
The golden ewer a nymph obsequious brings,
Replenish'd from the cool translucent springs;
With copious water the bright vase supplies
A silver laver of capacious size.
I wash'd. The table in fair order spread,
They heap the glittering canisters with bread;
Viands of various kinds allure the taste,
Of choicest sort and savour, rich repast!
Circe in vain invites the feast to share;
Absent I ponder, and absorpt in care:
While scenes of woe rose anxious in my breast,
The queen beheld me, and these words address'd:
"Why sits Ulysses silent and apart,
Some hoard of grief close-harbour'd at his heart?
Untouch'd before thee stand the cates divine,
And unregarded laughs the rosy wine.
Can yet a doubt, or any dread remain,
When sworn that oath which never can be vain?"
'I answer'd, "Goddess! humane is thy breast,
By justice sway'd, by tender pity press'd:
Ill fits it me, whose friends are sunk to beasts,
To quaff thy bowls, or riot in thy feasts.
Me wouldst thou please? for them thy cares employ,
And them to me restore, and me to joy."

'With that, she parted: in her potent hand
She bore the virtue of the magic wand.
Then hastening to the styes, set wide the door,
Urg'd forth, and drove the bristly herd before;
Unwieldy, out they rush'd, with general cry,
Enormous beasts dishonest to the eye.
Now touch'd by counter-charms, they change again,
And stand majestic, and recall'd to men.
Those hairs of late that bristled every part,
Fall off; miraculous effect of art!
Till all the form in full proportion rise,
More young, more large, more graceful to my eyes.
They saw, they knew me, and with eager pace
Clung to their master in a long embrace;
Sad, pleasing sight! with tears each eye ran o'er,
And sobs of joy re-echoed through the bow'r:
E'en Circe wept, her adamantine heart
Felt pity enter, and sustain'd her part.
"Son of Laertes! (then the queen began)
Oh much-enduring, much-experienc'd man!
Haste to thy vessel on the sea-beat shore,
Unload thy treasures, and the galley moor:
Then bring thy friends, secure from future harms,
And in our grottos stow thy spoils and arms."
'She said. Obedient to her high command
I quit the place, and hasten to the strand,
My sad companions on the beach I found,
Their wistful eyes in floods of sorrow drown'd.
As from fresh pastures and the dewy field
(When loaded cribs their evening banquet yield)
The lowing herds return; around them throng
With leaps and bounds their late-imprison'd young,
Rush to their mothers with unruly joy,
And echoing hills return the tender cry:

So round me press'd, exulting at my sight,
With cries and agonies of wild delight,
The weeping sailors; nor less fierce their joy
Than if return'd to Ithaca from Troy.
"Ah, master! ever honour'd, ever dear,
(These tender words on every side I hear)
What other joy can equal thy return?
Not that lov'd country for whose sight we mourn,
The soil that nurs'd us, and that gave us breath:
But, ah! relate our lost companions' death."
'I answer'd cheerful: "Haste, your galley moor,
And bring our treasures and our arms ashore:
Those in yon hollow caverns let us lay;
Then rise and follow where I lead the way.
Your fellows live: believe your eyes, and come
To taste the joys of Circe's sacred dome."
'With ready speed the joyful crew obey:
Alone Eurylochus persuades their stay.
"Whither (he cried) ah whither will ye run?
Seek ye to meet those evils ye should shun?
Will you the terrors of the dome explore,
In swine to grovel, or in lions roar,
Or wolf-like howl away the midnight hour
In dreadful watch around the magic bow'r?
Remember Cyclops, and his bloody deed;
The leader's rashness made the soldiers bleed."
'I heard incens'd, and first resolv'd to speed
My flying falchion at the rebel's head.
Dear as he was, by ties of kindred bound,
This hand had stretch'd him breathless on the ground;
But all at once my interposing train
For mercy pleaded, nor could plead in vain.
"Leave here the man who dares his prince desert,
Leave to repentance and his own sad heart,

To guard the ship. Seek we the sacred shades
Of Circe's palace, where Ulysses leads."
'This with one voice declar'd, the rising train
Left the black vessel by the murmuring main.
Shame touch'd Eurylochus's alter'd breast,
He fear'd my threats, and follow'd with the rest.
'Meanwhile the goddess, with indulgent cares
And social joys, the late-transform'd repairs;
The bath, the feast, their fainting soul renews;
Rich in refulgent robes, and dropping balmy dews:
Brightening with joy their eager eyes behold
Each other's face, and each his story told;
Then gushing tears the narrative confound,
And with their sobs the vaulted roofs resound.
When hush'd their passion, thus the goddess cries:
"Ulysses, taught by labours to be wise,
Let this short memory of grief suffice.
To me are known the various woes ye bore,
In storms by sea, in perils on the shore;
Forget whatever was in fortune's pow'r,
And share the pleasures of this genial hour.
Such be your minds as ere ye left your coast,
Or learn'd to sorrow for a country lost.
Exiles and wanderers now, where'er ye go,
Too faithful memory renews your woe:
The cause renew'd, habitual griefs remain,
And the soul saddens by the use of pain."
'Her kind intreaty mov'd the general breast;
Tir'd with long toil, we willing sunk to rest.
We plied the banquet and the bowl we crown'd,
Till the full circle of the year came round.
But when the seasons, following in their train,
Brought back the months, the days, and hours again;

As from a lethargy at once they rise,
And urge their chief with animating cries.
"Is this, Ulysses, our inglorious lot?
And is the name of Ithaca forgot?
Shall never the dear land in prospect rise,
Or the lov'd palace glitter in our eyes?"
'Melting I heard; yet till the sun's decline
Prolong'd the feast, and quaff'd the rosy wine:
But when the shades came on at evening hour,
And all lay slumbering in the dusky bow'r;
I came a suppliant to fair Circe's bed,
The tender moment seiz'd, and thus I said:
"Be mindful, goddess, of thy promise made;
Must sad Ulysses ever be delay'd?
Around their lord my sad companions mourn,
Each breast beats homeward, anxious to return:
If but a moment parted from thy eyes,
Their tears flow round me, and my heart complies."
"Go then (she cry'd), ah go! yet think, not I,
Not Circe, but the fates your wish deny.
Ah hope not yet to breathe thy native air!
Far other journey first demands thy care;
To tread the uncomfortable paths beneath,
And view the realms of darkness and of death.
There seek the Theban bard, depriv'd of sight;
Within, irradiate with prophetic light;
To whom Persephone, entire and whole,
Gave to retain the' unseparated soul:
The rest are forms, of empty æther made;
Impassive semblance, and a flitting shade."
'Struck at the word, my very heart was dead;
Pensive I sat; my tears bedew'd the bed;
To hate the light and life my soul began,
And saw that all was grief beneath the sun.

Compos'd at length, the gushing tears suppress'd,
And my toss'd limbs now wearied into rest,
"How shall I tread (I cried), ah, Circe! say,
The dark descent, and who shall guide the way?
Can living eyes behold the realms below?
What bark to waft me, and what wind to blow?"
"Thy fated road (the magic power replied),
Divine Ulysses! asks no mortal guide.
Rear but the mast, the spacious sail display,
The northern winds shall wing thee on thy way.
Soon shalt thou reach old ocean's utmost ends,
Where to the main the shelving shore descends;
The barren trees of Proserpine's black woods,
Poplars and willows trembling o'er the floods:
There fix thy vessel in the lonely bay,
And enter there the kingdoms void of day:
Where Phlegeton's loud torrents rushing down,
Hiss in the flaming gulf of Acheron;
And where, slow-rolling from the Stygian bed,
Cocytus' lamentable waters spread:
Where the dark rock o'erhangs the' infernal lake,
And mingling streams eternal murmurs make.
First draw thy falchion, and on every side
Trench the black earth a cubit long and wide;
To all the shades around libations pour,
And o'er the' ingredient strew the hallow'd flour:
New wine and milk, with honey temper'd, bring,
And living water from the crystal spring,
Then the wan shades and feeble ghosts implore,
With promis'd offerings on thy native shore;
A barren cow, the stateliest of the isle,
And, heap'd with various wealth, a blazing pile:
These to the rest; but to the seer must bleed
A sable ram, the pride of all thy breed.

These solemn vows and holy offerings paid
To all the phantom-nations of the dead;
Be next thy care the sable sheep to place
Full o'er the pit, and hell-ward turn their face:
But from the' infernal rite thine eye withdraw,
And back to ocean glance with reverend awe.
Sudden shall skim along the dusky glades
Thin airy shoals of visionary shades.
Then give command the sacrifice to haste,
Let the flay'd victims in the flame be cast,
And sacred vows, and mystic song applied
To grisly Pluto, and his gloomy bride.
Wide o'er the pool, thy falchion wav'd around
Shall drive the spectres from forbidden ground:
The sacred draught shall all the dead forbear,
Till awful from the shades arise the seer.
Let him, oraculous, the end, the way,
The turns of all thy future fate, display,
Thy pilgrimage to come, and remnant of thy day."
'So speaking, from the ruddy orient shone
The morn conspicuous on her golden throne.
The goddess with a radiant tunic dress'd
My limbs, and o'er me cast a silken vest.
Long flowing robes, of purest white, array
The nymph that added lustre to the day:
A tiar wreath'd her head with many a fold;
Her waist was circled with a zone of gold.
Forth issuing then, from place to place I flew;
Rouse man by man, and animate my crew.
"Rise, rise, my mates! 'tis Circe gives command:
Our journey calls us; haste, and quit the land."
All rise and follow, yet depart not all,
For fate decreed one wretched man to fall.

'A youth there was, Elpenor was he nam'd,
Not much for sense, nor much for courage, fam'd;
The youngest of our band, a vulgar soul
Born but to banquet, and to drain the bowl.
He, hot and careless, on a turret's height
With sleep repair'd the long debauch of night:
The sudden tumult stirr'd him where he lay,
And down he hasten'd, but forgot the way;
Full endlong from the roof the sleeper fell,
And snapp'd the spinal joint, and wak'd in hell.
'The rest crowd round me with an eager look;
I met them with a sigh, and thus bespoke:
"Already, friends! ye think your toils are o'er,
Your hopes already touch your native shore:
Alas! far otherwise the nymph declares,
Far other journey first demands our cares;
To tread the' uncomfortable paths beneath,
The dreary realms of darkness and of death:
To seek Tiresias' awful shade below,
And thence our fortunes and our fates to know."
'My sad companions heard in deep despair;
Frantic they tore their manly growth of hair;
To earth they fell; the tears began to rain;
But tears in mortal miseries are vain.
Sadly they far'd along the sea-beat shore;
Still heav'd their hearts, and still their eyes ran o'er.
The ready victims at our bark we found,
The sable ewe, and ram, together bound:
For swift as thought the goddess had been there,
And thence had glided, viewless as the air:
The paths of gods what mortal can survey?
Who eyes their motion, who shall trace their way?

THE

ELEVENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE DESCENT INTO HELL.

ULYSSES continues his narration—How he arrived at the land of the Cimmerians, and what ceremonies he performed to invoke the dead. The manner of his descent, and the apparition of the shades: his conversation with Elpenor, and with Tiresias, who informs him in a prophetic manner of his fortunes to come. He meets his mother Anticlea, from whom he learns the state of his family. He sees the shades of the ancient heroines, afterwards of the heroes, and converses in particular with Agamemnon and Achilles. Ajax keeps at a sullen distance, and disdains to answer him. He then beholds Tityus, Tantalus, Sysiphus, Hercules: till he is deterred from further curiosity by the apparition of horrid spectres, and the cries of the wicked in torments.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XI.

'Now to the shores we bend, a mournful train,
Climb the tall bark, and launch into the main:
At once the mast we rear, at once unbind
The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind:
Then pale and pensive stand, with cares oppress'd,
And solemn horror saddens every breast.
A freshening breeze the magic power supplied,
While the wing'd vessel flew along the tide;
Our oars we shipp'd: all day the swelling sails
Full from the guiding pilot catch'd the gales.
'Now sunk the sun from his aërial height,
And o'er the shaded billows rush'd the night:
When lo! we reach'd old Ocean's utmost bounds,
Where rocks control his waves with ever-during mounds.
'There in a lonely land, and gloomy cells,
The dusky nation of Cimmeria dwells;
The sun ne'er views the' uncomfortable seats,
When radiant he advances, or retreats:
Unhappy race! whom endless night invades,
Clouds the dull air, and wraps them round in shades.

'The ship we moor on these obscure abodes;
Disbark the sheep, an offering to the gods;
And hell-ward bending, o'er the beach descry
The dolesome passage to the' infernal sky.
The victims, vow'd to each Tartarean pow'r,
Eurylochus and Perimedes bore.
'Here open'd hell, all hell I here implor'd,
And from the scabbard drew the shining sword;
And trenching the black earth on every side,
A cavern form'd, a cubit long and wide.
New wine, with honey-temper'd milk, we bring,
Then living waters from the crystal spring;
O'er these was strew'd the consecrated flour,
And on the surface shone the holy store.
'Now the wan shades we hail, the' infernal gods,
To speed our course, and waft us o'er the floods:
So shall a barren heifer from the stall
Beneath the knife upon your altars fall;
So in our palace, at our safe return,
Rich with unnumber'd gifts the pile shall burn;
So shall a ram the largest of the breed,
Black as these regions, to Tiresias bleed.
'Thus solemn rites and holy vows we paid
To all the phantom-nations of the dead.
Then died the sheep; a purple torrent flow'd,
And all the caverns smok'd with streaming blood.
When lo! appear'd along the dusky coasts,
Thin, airy shoals of visionary ghosts;
Fair, pensive youths, and soft enamour'd maids;
And wither'd elders, pale and wrinkled shades;
Ghastly with wounds, the forms of warriors slain
Stalk'd with majestic port, a martial train:
These and a thousand more swarm'd o'er the ground,
And all the dire assembly shriek'd around.

Astonish'd at the sight, aghast I stood,
And a cold fear ran shivering through my blood:
Straight I command the sacrifice to haste,
Straight the flay'd victims to the flames are cast,
And mutter'd vows, and mystic song, apply'd
To grisly Pluto, and his gloomy bride.
'Now swift I wav'd my falchion o'er the blood;
Back started the pale throngs, and trembling stood,
Round the black trench the gore untasted flows,
Till awful from the shades Tiresias rose. [vey'd,
'There wandering through the gloom, I first sur-
New to the realms of death, Elpenor's shade:
His cold remains all naked to the sky,
On distant shores unwept, unburied lie.
Sad at the sight I stand, deep fix'd in woe,
And ere I spoke the tears began to flow.
"O say what angry power Elpenor led
To glide in shades, and wander with the dead?
How could thy soul, by realms and seas disjoin'd,
Outfly the nimble sail, and leave the lagging wind?"
'The ghost replied: "To hell my doom I owe,
Demons accurs'd, dire ministers of woe!
My feet, through wine unfaithful to their weight,
Betray'd me tumbling from a towery height:
Staggering I reel'd, and as I reel'd I fell,
Lux'd the neck-joint—my soul descends to hell.
But lend me aid, I now conjure thee lend,
By the soft tie and sacred name of friend!
By thy fond consort! by thy father's cares!
By lov'd Telemachus's blooming years!
For well I know that soon the heavenly pow'rs
Will give thee back to day and Circe's shores:
There pious on my cold remains attend,
There call to mind thy poor departed friend;

The tribute of a tear is all I crave,
And the possession of a peaceful grave.
But if, unheard, in vain compassion plead,
Revere the gods, the gods avenge the dead!
A tomb along the watery margin raise,
The tomb with manly arms and trophies grace,
To show posterity Elpenor was.
There high in air, memorial of my name,
Fix the smooth oar, and bid me live to fame."
'To whom with tears: "These rites, O mournful shade!
Due to thy ghost, shall to thy ghost be paid."
'Still as I spoke, the phantom seem'd to moan,
Tear follow'd tear, and groan succeeded groan.
But as my waving sword the blood surrounds,
The shade withdrew, and mutter'd empty sounds.
'There as the wondrous visions I survey'd,
All pale ascends my royal mother's shade:
A queen, to Troy she saw our legions pass;
Now a thin form is all Anticlea was!
Struck at the sight I melt with filial woe,
And down my cheek the pious sorrows flow:
Yet as I shook my falchion o'er the blood,
Regardless of her son the parent stood.
'When lo! the mighty Theban I behold;
To guide his steps he bore a staff of gold:
Awful he trod! majestic was his look!
And from his holy lips these accents broke:
"Why, mortal, wanderest thou from cheerful day,
To tread the downward melancholy way?
What angry gods to these dark legions led
Thee yet alive, companion of the dead?
But sheathe thy poniard, while my tongue relates
Heaven's stedfast purpose, and thy future fates."

'While yet he spoke, the prophet I obey'd,
And in the scabbard plung'd the glittering blade.
Eager he quaff'd the gore, and then express'd
Dark things to come, the counsels of his breast.
"Weary of light, Ulysses here explores,
A prosperous voyage to his native shores:
But know—by me unerring Fates disclose
New trains of dangers, and new scenes of woes;
I see! I see, thy bark by Neptune test,
For injur'd Cyclops, and his eye-ball lost!
Yet to thy woes the gods decree an end,
If heaven thou please; and how to please attend!
Where on Trinacrian rocks the ocean roars,
Graze numerous herds along the verdant shores;
Though hunger press, yet fly the dangerous prey,
The herds are sacred to the god of day,
Who all surveys with his extensive eye,
Above, below, on earth, and in the sky!
Rob not the god, and so propitious gales
Attend thy voyage, and impel thy sails;
But if his herds ye seize, beneath the waves
I see thy friends o'erwhelm'd in liquid graves!
The direful wreck Ulysses scarce survives!
Ulysses at his country scarce arrives!
Strangers thy guides! nor there thy labours end,
New foes arise, domestic ills attend!
There foul adulterers to thy bride resort,
And lordly gluttons riot in thy court.
But vengeance hastes amain! These eyes behold
The deathful scene, princes on princes roll'd!
That done, a people far from sea explore,
Who ne'er knew salt, or heard the billows roar,
Or saw gay vessel stem the watery plain,
A painted wonder flying on the main!

Bear on thy back an oar: with strange amaze
A shepherd meeting thee, the oar surveys,
And names a van: there fix it on the plain,
To calm the god that holds the watery reign;
A threefold offering to his altar bring,
A bull, a ram, a boar; and hail the ocean-king.
But home return'd, to each ethereal pow'r
Slay the due victim in the genial hour:
So peaceful shalt thou end thy blissful days,
And steal thyself from life by slow decays:
Unknown to pain, in age resign thy breath,
When late stern Neptune points the shaft with death,
To the dark grave retiring as to rest,
Thy people blessing, by thy people bless'd!
"Unerring truths, O man, my lips relate;
This is thy life to come, and this is fate."
'To whom unmov'd: "If this the gods prepare,
What heaven ordains, the wise with courage bear.
But say, why yonder on the lonely strands,
Unmindful of her son, Anticlea stands?
Why to the ground she bends her downcast eye?
Why is she silent, while her son is nigh?
The latent cause, O sacred seer, reveal!"
"Nor this (replies the seer) will I conceal.
Know; to the spectres, that thy beverage taste,
The scenes of life recur, and actions pass'd;
They, seal'd with truth, return the sure reply;
The rest, repell'd, a train oblivious fly."
'The phantom-prophet ceas'd, and sunk from sight
To the black palace of eternal night.
'Still in the dark abodes of death I stood,
When near Anticlea mov'd, and drank the blood.
Straight all the mother in her soul awakes,
And, owning her Ulysses, thus she speaks:

"Com'st thou, my son, alive, to realms beneath,
The dolesome realms of darkness and of death:
Com'st thou alive from pure, ethereal day?
Dire is the region, dismal is the way!
Here lakes profound, there floods oppose their waves,
There the wide sea with all his billows raves!
Or (since to dust proud Troy submits her tow'rs)
Com'st thou a wanderer from the Phrygian shores?
Or say, since honour call'd thee to the field,
Hast thou thy Ithaca, thy bride, beheld."

"Source of my life, (I cried) from earth I fly
To seek Tiresias in the nether sky,
To learn my doom; for, tost from woe to woe,
In every land Ulysses finds a foe:
Nor have these eyes beheld my native shores,
Since in the dust proud Troy submits her tow'rs.

"But, when thy soul from her sweet mansion fled,
Say, what distemper gave thee to the dead?
Has life's fair lamp declin'd by slow decays,
Or swift expir'd it in a sudden blaze?
Say, if my sire, good old Laertes, lives?
If yet Telemachus, my son, survives?
Say, by his rule is my dominion aw'd,
Or crush'd by traitors with an iron rod?
Say, if my spouse maintains her royal trust,
Though tempted chaste, and obstinately just?
Or if no more her absent lord she wails,
But the false woman o'er the wife prevails?"

'Thus I, and thus the parent-shade returns:
"Thee, ever thee, thy faithful consort mourns:
Whether the night descends, or day prevails,
Thee she by night, and thee by day bewails;
Thee in Telemachus thy realm obeys;
In sacred groves celestial rites he pays,

And shares the banquet in superior state,
Grac'd with such honours as become the great.
Thy sire in solitude foments his care:
The court is joyless, for thou art not there!
No costly carpets raise his hoary head,
No rich embroidery shines to grace his bed;
E'en when keen winter freezes in the skies,
Rank'd with his slaves, on earth the monarch lies:
Deep are his sighs, his visage pale, his dress
The garb of woe and habit of distress.
And when the autumn takes his annual round,
The leafy honours scattering on the ground;
Regardless of his years, abroad he lies,
His bed the leaves, his canopy the skies.
Thus cares on cares his painful days consume,
And bow his age with sorrow to the tomb!

"For thee, my son, I wept my life away;
For thee through hell's eternal dungeons stray:
Nor came my fate by lingering pains and slow,
Nor bent the silver-shafted queen her bow;
No dire disease bereav'd me of my breath;
Thou, thou, my son, wert my disease and death;
Unkindly with my love my son conspir'd,
For thee I liv'd, for absent thee expir'd."

'Thrice in my arms I strove her shade to bind,
Thrice through my arms she slipp'd like empty wind,
Or dreams, the vain illusions of the mind.
Wild with despair, I shed a copious tide
Of flowing tears, and thus with sighs replied:

"Fly'st thou, lov'd shade, while I thus fondly mourn?
Turn to my arms, to my embraces turn!
Is it, ye powers that smile at human harms,
Too great a bliss to weep within her arms?

Or has hell's queen an empty image sent,
That wretched I might e'en my joys lament?"
"O son of woe! (the pensive shade rejoin'd)
O most inur'd to grief of all mankind!
'Tis not the queen of hell who thee deceives:
All, all are such, when life the body leaves;
No more the substance of the man remains,
Nor bounds the blood along the purple veins:
These the funereal flames in atoms bear,
To wander with the wind in empty air;
While the impassive soul reluctant flies,
Like a vain dream, to these infernal skies.
But from the dark dominions speed thy way,
And climb the steep ascent to upper day;
To thy chaste bride the wondrous story tell,
The woes, the horrors, and the laws of hell." [brings
'Thus while she spoke, in swarms hell's empress
Daughters and wives of heroes and of kings;
Thick, and more thick, they gather round the blood,
Ghost throng'd on ghost (a dire assembly) stood!
Dauntless my sword I seize: the airy crew,
Swift as it flash'd along the gloom, withdrew;
Then shade to shade in mutual forms succeeds,
Her race recounts, and their illustrious deeds.
'Tyro began: whom great Salmoneus bred;
The royal partner of fam'd Crethens' bed.
For fair Enipeus, as from fruitful urns
He pours his watery store, the virgin burns;
Smooth flows the gentle stream with wanton pride,
And in soft mazes rolls a silver tide.
As on his banks the maid enamour'd roves,
The monarch of the deep beholds and loves;
In her Enipeus' form and borrow'd charms,
The amorous god descends into her arms:

Around, a spacious arch of waves he throws,
And high in air the liquid mountain rose;
Thus in surrounding floods conceal'd he proves
The pleasing transport, and completes his loves.
Then softly sighing, he the fair address'd,
And as he spoke her tender hand he press'd.
"Hail, happy nymph! no vulgar births are ow'd
To the prolific raptures of a god:
Lo! when nine times the moon renews her horn,
Two brother heroes shall from thee be born;
Thy early care the future worthies claim,
To point them to the arduous paths of fame;
But in thy breast the' important truth conceal,
Nor dare the secret of a god reveal:
For know, thou Neptune view'st! and at my nod
Earth trembles, and the waves confess their god."
'He added not, but mounting spurn'd the plain,
Then plung'd into the chambers of the main.
'Now in the time's full process forth she brings
Jove's dread vicegerents, in two future kings;
O'er proud Iolcos Pelias stretch'd his reign,
And godlike Neleus rul'd the Pylian plain:
Then fruitful, to her Cretheus' royal bed
She gallant Pheres and fam'd Æson bred:
From the same fountain Amythaon rose,
Pleas'd with the din of war, and noble shout of foes.
'There mov'd Antiope with haughty charms,
Who bless'd the' almighty thunderer in her arms:
Hence sprung Amphion, hence brave Zethus came,
Founders of Thebes, and men of mighty name;
Though bold in open field, they yet surround
The town with walls, and mound inject on mound;
Here ramparts stood, there towers rose high in air,
And here through seven wide portals rush'd the war.

'There with soft step the fair Alcmena trod,
Who bore Alcides to the thundering god;
And Megara, who charm'd the son of Jove,
And soften'd his stern soul to tender love.
'Sullen and sour with discontented mien
Jocasta frown'd, the' incestuous Theban queen;
With her own son she join'd in nuptial bands,
Though father's blood imbrued his murderous hands:
The gods and men the dire offence detest,
The gods with all their furies rend his breast:
In lofty Thebes he wore the' imperial crown,
A pompous wretch! accurs'd upon a throne.
The wife self-murder'd from a beam depends,
And her foul soul to blackest hell descends;
Thence to her son the choicest plagues she brings,
And the fiends haunt him with a thousand stings.
'And now the beauteous Chloris I descry,
A lovely shade, Amphion's youngest joy!
With gifts unnumber'd Neleus sought her arms,
Nor paid too dearly for unequall'd charms;
Great in Orchomenos, in Pylos great,
He sway'd the sceptre with imperial state.
Three gallant sons the joyful monarch told,
Sage Nestor, Periclimenus the bold,
And Chromius last; but of the softer race,
One nymph alone, a miracle of grace.
Kings on their thrones for lovely Pero burn,
The sire denies, and kings rejected mourn.
To him alone the beauteous prize he yields,
Whose arm should ravish from Phylacian fields
The herds of Iphyclus, detain'd in wrong;
Wild, furious herds, unconquerably strong!
This dares a seer, but nought the seer prevails,
In beauty's cause illustriously he fails;

Twelve moons the foe the captive youth detains
In painful dungeons, and coercive chains;
The foe at last, from durance where he lay,
His art revering, gave him back to day;
Won by prophetic knowledge, to fulfil
The stedfast purpose of the' almighty will.
'With graceful port advancing now I spy'd
Leda the fair, the godlike Tyndar's bride:
Hence Pollux sprung, who wields with furious sway
The deathful gauntlet, matchless in the fray:
And Castor glorious on the' embattled plain
Curbs the proud steed, reluctant to the rein:
By turns they visit this ethereal sky,
And live alternate, and alternate die:
In hell beneath, on earth, in heaven above,
Reign the twin-gods, the favourite sons of Jove.
'There Ephimedia trod the gloomy plain,
Who charm'd the monarch of the boundless main;
Hence Ephialtes, hence stern Otus sprung,
More fierce than giants, more than giants strong;
The earth o'erburden'd groan'd beneath their weight,
None but Orion e'er surpass'd their height:
The wondrous youths had scarce nine winters told,
When high in air, tremendous to behold,
Nine ells aloft they rear'd their towering head,
And full nine cubits broad their shoulders spread.
Proud of their strength, and more than mortal size,
The gods they challenge, and affect the skies;
Heav'd on Olympus tottering Ossa stood;
On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood:
Such were they youths! had they to manhood grown,
Almighty Jove had trembled on his throne.
But ere the harvest of the beard began
To bristle on the chin, and promise man,

His shafts Apollo aim'd ; at once they sound,
And stretch the giant-monsters o'er the ground.
'There mournful Phædra with sad Procris moves,
Both beauteous shades, both hapless in their loves ;
And near them walk'd, with solemn pace and slow,
Sad Ariadne, partner of their woe ;
The royal Minos Ariadne bred,
She Theseus lov'd ; from Crete with Theseus fled ;
Swift to the Dian isle the hero flies,
And towards his Athens bears the lovely prize ;
There Bacchus with fierce rage Diana fires,
The goddess aims her shaft, the nymph expires.
'There Clymenè and Mera I behold ;
There Eriphylè weeps, who loosely sold
Her lord, her honour, for the lust of gold.
But should I all recount, the night would fail,
Unequal to the melancholy tale ;
And all-composing rest my nature craves,
Here in the court, or yonder on the waves :
In you I trust, and in the heavenly pow'rs,
To land Ulysses on his native shores.'
He ceas'd ; but left so charming on their ear
His voice, that listening still they seem'd to hear.
Till rising up, Aretè silence broke,
Stretch'd out her snowy hand, and thus she spoke :
'What wondrous man heaven sends us in our guest !
Through all his woes the hero shines confess'd ;
His comely port, his ample frame, express
A manly air, majestic in distress.
He, as my guest, is my peculiar care ;
You share the pleasure,—then in bounty share ;
To worth in misery, a reverence pay,
And with a generous hand reward his stay ;

For since kind heaven with wealth our realm has
Give it to heaven, by aiding the distress'd.' [bless'd,
Then sage Echeneus, whose grave reverend brow
The hand of time had silver'd o'er with snow,
Mature in wisdom rose: 'Your words (he cries)
Demand obedience, for your words are wise.
But let our king direct the glorious way
To generous acts; our part is to obey.'
'While life informs these limbs (the king replied)
Well to deserve, be all my cares employ'd:
But here this night the royal guest detain,
Till the sun flames along the ethereal plain:
Be it my task to send with ample stores
The stranger from our hospitable shores:
Tread you my steps! 'Tis mine to lead the race,
The first in glory, as the first in place.'
To whom the prince: 'This night with joy I stay,
O monarch great in virtue as in sway!
If thou the circling year my stay control,
To raise a bounty noble as thy soul;
The circling year I wait, with ampler stores
And fitter pomp to hail my native shores:
Then by my realms due homage would be paid;
For wealthy kings are loyally obey'd!'
'O king! for such thou art, and sure thy blood
Through veins (he cried) of royal fathers flow'd;
Unlike those vagrants who on falsehood live,
Skill'd in smooth tales, and artful to deceive;
Thy better soul abhors the liar's part,
Wise is thy voice, and noble is thy heart.
Thy words like music every breast control,
Steal through the ear, and win upon the soul;
Soft, as some song divine, thy story flows,
Nor better could the muse record thy woes.

'But say, upon the dark and dismal coast
Saw'st thou the worthies of the Grecian host;
The godlike leaders who, in battle slain,
Fell before Troy, and nobly press'd the plain?
And lo! a length of night behind remains,
The evening stars still mount the' ethereal plains.
Thy tale with raptures I could hear thee tell,
Thy woes on earth, the wondrous scenes in hell,
Till in the vault of heaven the stars decay,
And the sky reddens with the rising day.'

'O worthy of the power the gods assign'd,
(Ulysses thus replies) a king in mind!
Since yet the early hour of night allows
Time for discourse, and time for soft repose,
If scenes of misery can entertain,
Woes I unfold, of woes a dismal train.
Prepare to hear of murder and of blood;
Of godlike heroes who uninjur'd stood
Amidst a war of spears in foreign lands,
Yet bled at home, and bled by female hands.

'Now summon'd Proserpine to hell's black hall
The heroine shades; they vanish'd at her call.
'When lo! advanc'd the forms of heroes slain
By stern Egysthus, a majestic train,
And high above the rest, Atrides press'd the plain.
He quaff'd the gore; and straight his soldier knew,
And from his eyes pour'd down the tender dew;
His arms he stretch'd; his arms the touch decsive,
Nor in the fond embrace, embraces give:
His substance vanish'd, and his strength decay'd,
Now all Atrides is an empty shade.

'Mov'd at the sight, I for a space resign'd
To soft affliction all my manly mind;

At last with tears—" Oh what relentless doom,
Imperial phantom, bow'd thee to the tomb?
Say, while the sea, and while the tempest raves,
Has fate oppress'd thee in the roaring waves,
Or nobly seiz'd thee in the dire alarms
Of war and slaughter, and the clash of arms?"
'The ghost returns: " O chief of humankind
For active courage and a patient mind;
Nor while the sea, nor while the tempest raves,
Has fate oppress'd me on the roaring waves;
Nor nobly seiz'd me in the dire alarms
Of war and slaughter, and the clash of arms.
Stabb'd by a murderous hand Atrides died,
A foul adulterer, and a faithless bride;
E'en in my mirth, and at the friendly feast,
O'er the full bowl, the traitor stabb'd his guest.
Thus by the gory arm of slaughter falls
The stately ox, and bleeds within the stalls.
But not with me the direful murder ends, [friends:
These, these expir'd! their crime, they were my
Thick as the boars, which some luxurious lord
Kills for the feast, to crown the nuptial board.
When war has thunder'd with its loudest storms,
Death thou hast seen in all her ghastly forms;
In duel met her on the listed ground,
When hand to hand they wound return for wound;
But never have thy eyes astonish'd view'd
So vile a deed, so dire a scene of blood.
E'en in the flow of joy, when now the bowl
Glows in our veins, and opens every soul,
We groan, we faint; with blood the dome is dyed,
And o'er the pavement floats the dreadful tide—
Her breast all gore, with lamentable cries,
The bleeding innocent Cassandra dies!

Then though pale death froze cold in every vein,
My sword I strive to wield, but strive in vain;
Nor did my traitoress wife these eyelids close,
Or decently in death my limbs compose.
O woman, woman! when to ill thy mind
Is bent, all hell contains no fouler fiend:
And such was mine! who basely plung'd her sword
Through the fond bosom where she reign'd ador'd!
Alas! I hop'd, the toils of war o'ercome,
To meet soft quiet and repose at home:
Delusive hope! O wife, thy deeds disgrace
The perjur'd sex, and blacken all the race;
And should posterity one virtuous find,
Name Clytemnestra, they will curse the kind."
"O injur'd shade (I cry'd), what mighty woes
To thy imperial race from woman rose!
By woman here thou tread'st this mournful strand,
And Greece by woman lies a desert land."
"Warn'd by my ills beware (the shade replies),
Nor trust the sex that is so rarely wise;
When earnest to explore thy secret breast,
Unfold some trifle, but conceal the rest.
But in thy consort cease to fear a foe,
For thee she feels sincerity of woe:
When Troy first bled beneath the Grecian arms
She shone unrivall'd with a blaze of charms,
Thy infant son her fragrant bosom press'd,
Hung at her knee, or wanton'd at her breast;
But now the years a numerous train have ran;
The blooming boy is ripen'd into man;
Thy eyes shall see him burn with noble fire,
The sire shall bless his son, the son his sire:
But my Orestes never met these eyes,
Without one look the murder'd father dies;

Then from a wretched friend this wisdom learn,
E'en to thy queen disguis'd, unknown, return;
For since of womankind so few are just,
Think all are false, nor e'en the faithful trust.
"But say, resides my son in royal port,
In rich Orchomenos, or Sparta's court?
Or say, in Pyle? for yet he views the light,
Nor glides a phantom through the realms of night."
'Then I: "Thy suit is vain, nor can I say
If yet he breathes in realms of cheerful day;
Or pale or wan beholds these nether skies:
Truth I revere; for wisdom never lies."
'Thus in a tide of tears our sorrows flow,
And adds new horror to the realms of woe;
Till side by side along the dreary coast
Advanc'd Achilles' and Patroclus' ghost,
A friendly pair! near these the Pylian stray'd,
And towering Ajax, an illustrious shade!
War was his joy, and pleas'd with loud alarms,
None but Pelides brighter shone in arms.
'Through the thick gloom his friend Achilles knew,
And as he speaks the tears descend in dew:
"Com'st thou alive to view the Stygian bounds,
Where the wan spectres walk eternal rounds;
Nor fear'st the dark and dismal waste to tread,
Throng'd with pale ghosts, familiar with the dead?"
'To whom with sighs: "I pass these dreadful gates
To seek the Theban, and consult the fates:
For still distress'd I rove from coast to coast,
Lost to my friends, and to my country lost.
But sure the eye of time beholds no name
So bless'd as thine in all the rolls of fame;
Alive we hail'd thee with our guardian gods,
And, dead, thou rul'st a king in these abodes."

"Talk not of ruling, in this dolorous gloom,
Nor think vain words (he cried) can ease my doom.
Rather I'd choose laboriously to bear
A weight of woes, and breathe the vital air,
A slave to some poor hind that toils for bread,
Than reign the sceptred monarch of the dead.
But say, if in my steps my son proceeds,
And emulates his godlike father's deeds?
If at the clash of arms, and shout of foes,
Swells his bold heart, his bosom nobly glows?
Say if my sire, the reverend Peleus, reigns
Great in his Pthia, and his throne maintains;
Or weak and old, my youthful arm demands,
To fix the sceptre stedfast in his hands?
O might the lamp of life rekindled burn,
And death release me from the silent urn!
This arm that thunder'd o'er the Phrygian plain,
And swell'd the ground with mountains of the slain,
Should vindicate my injur'd father's fame,
Crush the proud rebel, and assert his claim."

"Illustrious shade (I cried) of Peleus' fates
No circumstance the voice of fame relates:
But hear with pleas'd attention the renown,
The wars and wisdom of thy gallant son:
With me from Scyros to the field of fame
Radiant in arms the blooming hero came.
When Greece assembled all her hundred states
To ripen counsels, and decide debates;
Heavens! how he charm'd us with a flow of sense,
And won the heart with manly eloquence!
He first was seen of all the peers to rise,
The third in wisdom, where they all were wise;
But when, to try the fortune of the day,
Host mov'd toward host in terrible array,

Before the van, impatient for the fight,
With martial port he strode, and stern delight;
Heaps strew'd on heaps beneath his falchion groan'd,
And monuments of dead deform'd the ground.
The time would fail should I in order tell
What foes were vanquish'd, and what numbers fell:
How, lost through love, Eurypylus was slain,
And round him bled his bold Cetæan train.
To Troy no hero came of nobler line,
Or if of nobler, Memnon, it was thine.
" When Ilion in the horse receiv'd her doom,
And unseen armies ambush'd in its womb;
Greece gave her latent warriors to my care,
'Twas mine on Troy to pour the' imprison'd war:
Then when the boldest bosom beat with fear,
When the stern eyes of heroes dropp'd a tear;
Fierce in his look his ardent valour glow'd,
Flush'd in his cheek, or sallied in his blood;
Indignant in the dark recess he stands,
Pants for the battle, and the war demands;
His voice breath'd death, and with a martial air
He grasp'd his sword, and shook his glittering spear.
And when the gods our arms with conquest crown'd,
When Troy's proud bulwarks smok'd upon the [ground,
Greece, to reward her soldier's gallant toils,
Heap'd high his navy with unnumber'd spoils.
" Thus great in glory, from the din of war
Safe he return'd, without one hostile scar;
Though spears in iron tempests rain'd around,
Yet innocent they play'd, and guiltless of a wound."
' While yet I spoke, the shade with transport [glow'd,
Rose in his majesty, and nobler trod;
With haughty stalk he sought the distant glades
Of warrior-kings, and join'd the' illustrious shades.

'Now without number ghost by ghost arose,
All wailing with unutterable woes.
Alone, apart, in discontented mood,
A gloomy shade, the sullen Ajax stood;
For ever sad, with proud disdain he pin'd,
And the lost arms for ever stung his mind;
Though to the contest Thetis gave the laws,
And Pallas, by the Trojans, judg'd the cause.
Oh why was I victorious in the strife;
O dear-bought honour with so brave a life!
With him the strength of war, the soldiers' pride,
Our second hope to great Achilles, died!
Touch'd at the sight from tears I scarce refrain,
And tender sorrow thrills in every vein;
Pensive and sad I stand, at length accost
With accents mild the' inexorable ghost: [sent
"Still burns thy rage? and can brave souls re-
E'en after death? Relent, great shade, relent!
Perish those arms which by the gods' decree
Accurs'd our army with the loss of thee!
With thee we fell; Greece wept thy hapless fates;
And shook astonish'd through her hundred states;
Not more, when great Achilles press'd the ground,
And breath'd his manly spirit through the wound.
O deem thy fall not ow'd to man's decree,
Jove hated Greece, and punish'd Greece in thee!
Turn then, O peaceful turn, thy wrath control,
And calm the raging tempest of thy soul."
'While yet I speak, the shade disdains to stay,
In silence turns, and sullen stalks away.
'Touch'd at his sour retreat, through deepest night,
Through hell's black bounds I had pursued his flight,
And forc'd the stubborn spectre to reply;
But wondrous visions drew my curious eye:

High on a throne, tremendous to behold,
Stern Minos waves a mace of burnish'd gold;
Around ten thousand thousand spectres stand
Through the wide dome of Dis, a trembling band.
Still as they plead, the fatal lots he rolls,
Absolves the just, and dooms the guilty souls.

'There huge Orion, of portentous size,
Swift through the gloom a giant-hunter flies;
A ponderous mace of brass with direful sway
Aloft he whirls, to crush the savage prey;
Stern beasts in trains that by his truncheon fell,
Now grisly forms, shoot o'er the lawns of hell.

'There Tityus large and long, in fetters bound,
O'erspread nine acres of infernal ground;
Two ravenous vultures, furious for their food,
Scream o'er the fiend, and riot in his blood,
Incessant gore the liver in his breast, [feast:
The immortal liver grows, and gives the' immortal
For as o'er Panopé's enamell'd plains
Latona journey'd to the Pythian fanes,
With haughty love the' audacious monster strove
To force the goddess, and to rival Jove.

'There Tantalus along the Stygian bounds
Pours out deep groans; (with groans all hell resounds)
E'en in the circling floods refreshment craves,
And pines with thirst amidst a sea of waves:
When to the water he his lip applies,
Back from his lip the treacherous water flies.
Above, beneath, around his hapless head,
Trees of all kinds delicious fruitage spread;
There figs sky-dyed, a purple hue disclose,
Green looks the olive, the pomegranate glows,
There dangling pears exalted scents unfold,
And yellow apples ripen into gold;

The fruit he strives to seize: but blasts arise,
Toss it on high, and whirl it to the skies.
'I turn'd my eye, and as I turn'd survey'd
A mournful vision! the Sisyphian shade;
With many a weary step, and many a groan,
Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone;
The huge round stone, resulting with a bound,
Thunders impetuous down, and smokes along the [ground.
Again the restless orb his toil renews,
Dust mounts in clouds, and sweat descends in dews.
'Now I the strength of Hercules beheld,
A towering spectre of gigantic mould,
A shadowy form! for high in heaven's abodes
Himself resides, a god among the gods;
There in the bright assemblies of the skies,
He nectar quaffs, and Hebe crowns his joys.
Here hovering ghosts, like fowl, his shade surround,
And clang their pinions with terrific sound;
Gloomy as night he stands, in act to throw
The aërial arrow from the twanging bow.
Around his breast a wondrous zone is roll'd,
Where woodland monsters grin in fretted gold:
There sullen lions sternly seem to roar,
The bear to growl, to foam the tusky boar;
There war and havoc and destruction stood,
And vengeful murder red with human blood.
Thus terribly adorn'd the figures shine,
Inimitably wrought with skill divine.
The mighty ghost advanc'd with awful look,
And, turning his grim visage, sternly spoke:
"O exercis'd in grief! by arts refin'd!
O taught to bear the wrongs of base mankind!
Such, such was I! still toss'd from care to care,
While in your world I drew the vital air!

E'en I who from the Lord of thunders rose,
Bore toils and dangers, and a weight of woes;
To a base monarch still a slave confin'd,
(The hardest bondage to a generous mind!)
Down to these worlds I trod the dismal way,
And dragg'd the three-mouth'd dog to upper day;
E'en hell I conquer'd, through the friendly aid
Of Maia's offspring and the martial maid."

'Thus he, nor deign'd for our reply to stay,
But turning stalk'd with giant-strides away.

'Curious to view the kings of ancient days,
The mighty dead that live in endless praise,
Resolv'd I stand; and haply had survey'd
The godlike Theseus, and Piritheus' shade;
But swarms of spectres rose from deepest hell,
With bloodless visage, and with hideous yell,
They scream, they shriek; sad groans and dismal sounds
Stun my scar'd ears, and pierce hell's utmost bounds.
No more my heart the dismal din sustains,
And my cold blood hangs shivering in my veins;
Lest Gorgon rising from the' infernal lakes,
With horrors arm'd, and curls of hissing snakes,
Should fix me, stiffen'd at the monstrous sight,
A stony image, in eternal night!
Straight from the direful coast to purer air
I speed my flight, and to my mates repair.
My mates ascend the ship; they strike their oars;
The mountains lessen, and retreat the shores;
Swift o'er the waves we fly; the freshening gales
Sing through the shrouds, and stretch the swelling sails.'

THE

TWELFTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE SIRENS, SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS.

HE relates, how, after his return from the shades, he was sent by Circe on his voyage, by the coast of the Sirens, and by the strait of Scylla and Charybdis; the manner in which he escaped those dangers: how, being cast on the island Trinacria, his companions destroyed the oxen of the sun; the vengeance that followed: how all perished by shipwreck except himself, who, swimming on the mast of the ship, arrived on the island of Calypso. With which his narration concludes.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XII.

'THUS o'er the rolling surge the vessel flies,
Till from the waves the' Ægean hills arise.
Here the gay Morn resides in radiant bow'rs,
Here keeps her revels with the dancing Hours;
Here Phœbus, rising in the' ethereal way,
Through heaven's bright portals pours the beamy day.
At once we fix our hálsers on the land,
At once descend, and press the desert sand;
There, worn and wasted, lose our cares in sleep,
To the hoarse murmurs of the rolling deep.
'Soon as the morn restor'd the day, we pay'd
Sepulchral honours to Elpenor's shade.
Now by the axe the rushing forest bends,
And the huge pile along the shore ascends.
Around we stand, a melancholy train,
And a loud groan re-echoes from the main.
Fierce o'er the pyre, by fanning breezes spread,
The hungry flame devours the silent dead.
A rising tomb, the silent dead to grace,
Fast by the roarings of the main we place;
The rising tomb a lofty column bore,
And high above it rose the tapering oar.

'Meantime the goddess our return survey'd
From the pale ghosts, and hell's tremendous shade.
Swift she descends: a train of nymphs divine
Bear the rich viands and the generous wine.
In act to speak, the power of magic stands,
And graceful thus accosts the listening bands:
"O sons of woe! decreed by adverse fates
Alive to pass through hell's eternal gates!
All, soon or late, are doom'd that path to tread;
More wretched you, twice number'd with the dead!
This day adjourn your cares; exalt your souls,
Indulge the taste, and drain the sparkling bowls;
And when the morn unveils her saffron ray,
Spread your broad sails, and plough the liquid way:
Lo I this night, your faithful guide, explain
Your woes by land, your dangers on the main."
'The goddess spoke; in feasts we waste the day,
Till Phœbus downward plung'd his burning ray;
Then sable night ascends, and balmy rest
Seals every eye, and calms the troubled breast.
Then, curious, she commands me to relate
The dreadful scenes of Pluto's dreary state;
She sat in silence while the tale I tell,
The wondrous visions, and the laws of hell.
'Then thus: "The lot of man the gods dispose;
These ills are past; now hear thy future woes.
O prince attend; some favouring power be kind,
And print the' important story on thy mind!
"Next, where the Sirens dwell, you plough the seas;
Their song is death, and makes destruction please.
Unbless'd the man, whose music wins to stay
Nigh the curs'd shore, and listen to the lay;
No more that wretch shall view the joys of life,
His blooming offspring, or his beauteous wife!

In verdant meads they sport, and wide around
Lie human bones, that whiten all the ground;
The ground polluted floats with human gore,
And human carnage taints the dreadful shore.
Fly swift the dangerous coast; let every ear
Be stopp'd against the song: 'tis death to hear!
Firm to the mast with chains thyself be bound,
Nor trust thy virtue to the enchanting sound.
If, mad with transport, freedom thou demand,
Be every fetter strain'd, and added band to band.
"These seas o'erpass'd, be wise! but I refrain
To mark distinct thy voyage o'er the main:
New horrors rise! let prudence be thy guide,
And guard thy various passage through the tide.
'High o'er the main two rocks exalt their brow,
The boiling billows thundering roll below;
Through the vast waves the dreadful wonders move,
Hence nam'd Erratic by the gods above.
No bird of air, no dove of swiftest wing,
That bears ambrosia to the' ethereal king,
Shuns the dire rocks: in vain she cuts the skies,
The dire rocks meet, and crush her as she flies.
Not the fleet bark, when prosperous breezes play,
Ploughs o'er that roaring surge its desperate way;
O'erwhelm'd it sinks: while round a smoke expires,
And the waves flashing seem to burn with fires.
Scarce the fam'd Argo pass'd these raging floods,
The sacred Argo, fill'd with demigods!
E'en she had sunk, but Jove's imperial bride
Wing'd her fleet sail, and push'd her o'er the tide.
"High in the air the rock its summit shrouds
In brooding tempests, and in rolling clouds;
Loud storms around and mists eternal rise,
Beat its bleak brow, and intercept the skies.

When all the broad expansion, bright with day,
Glows with the' autumnal or the summer ray,
The summer and the autumn glow in vain,
The sky for ever lours, for ever clouds remain.
Impervious to the step of man it stands,
Though borne by twenty feet, though arm'd with twenty hands;
Smooth as the polish of the mirror, rise
The slippery sides, and shoot into the skies.
Full in the centre of this rock display'd,
A yawning cavern casts a dreadful shade:
Nor the fleet arrow from the twanging bow,
Sent with full force, could reach the depth below.
Wide to the west the horrid gulf extends,
And the dire passage down to hell descends.
O fly the dreadful sight! expand thy sails,
Ply the strong oar, and catch the nimble gales:
Here Scylla bellows from her dire abodes,
Tremendous pest! abhorr'd by man and gods!
Hideous her voice, and with less terrors roar
The whelps of lions in the midnight hour.
Twelve feet, deform'd and foul, the fiend dispreads;
Six horrid necks she rears, and six terrific heads;
Her jaws grin dreadful with three rows of teeth;
Jaggy they stand, the gaping den of death;
Her parts obscene the raging billows hide;
Her bosom terribly o'erlooks the tide.
When stung with hunger she embroils the flood,
The sea-dog and the dolphin are her food;
She makes the huge leviathan her prey,
And all the monsters of the watry way;
The swiftest racer of the azure plain
Here fills her sails and spreads her oars in vain;

Fell Scylla rises, in her fury roars,
At once six mouths expands, at once six men devours.
" Close by, a rock of less enormous height
Breaks the wild waves, and forms a dang'rous strait;
Full on its crown a fig's green branches rise,
And shoot a leafy forest to the skies;
Beneath, Charybdis holds her boist'rous reign
'Midst roaring whirlpools, and absorbs the main;
Thrice in her gulfs the boiling seas subside,
Thrice in dire thunders she refunds the tide.
Oh if thy vessel plough the direful waves
When seas retreating roar within her caves,
Ye perish all! though he who rules the main
Lend his strong aid, his aid he lends in vain.
Ah shun the horrid gulf! by Scylla fly,
'Tis better six to lose, than all to die."
' I then: " O nymph propitious to my pray'r,
Goddess divine, my guardian power, declare,
Is the foul fiend from human vengeance freed?
Or if I rise in arms, can Scylla bleed?'
' Then she: " O worn by toils, O broke in fight,
Still are new toils and war thy dire delight?
Will martial flames for ever fire thy mind,
And never, never be to heav'n resign'd?
How vain thy efforts to avenge the wrong?
Deathless the pest! impenetrably strong!
Furious and fell, tremendous to behold!
E'en with a look she withers all the bold!
She mocks the weak attempts of human might:
O fly her rage! thy conquest is thy flight.
If but to seize thy arms thou make delay,
Again the fury vindicates her prey,
Her six mouths yawn, and six are snatch'd away.

From her foul womb Cratæis gave to air
This dreadful pest! To her direct thy pray'r,
To curb the monster in her dire abodes,
And guard thee through the tumult of the floods.
Thence to Trinacria's shore you bend your way,
Where graze thy herds, illustrious source of day!
Seven herds, seven flocks, enrich the sacred plains,
Each herd, each flock, full fifty heads contains;
The wondrous kind a length of age survey,
By breed increase not, nor by death decay.
Two sister goddesses possess the plain,
The constant guardians of the woolly train;
Lampetie fair, and Phaethusa young,
From Phœbus and the bright Neæra sprung:
Here watchful o'er the flocks, in shady bow'rs
And flowery meads they waste the joyous hours.
Rob not the god! and so propitious gales
Attend thy voyage, and impel thy sails;
But if thy impious hands the flocks destroy,
The gods, the gods avenge it, and ye die!
'Tis thine alone (thy friends and navy lost)
Through tedious toils to view thy native coast."

'She ceas'd: and now arose the morning ray;
Swift to her dome the goddess held her way.
Then to my mates I measur'd back the plain,
Climb'd the tall bark, and rush'd into the main;
Then bending to the stroke, their oars they drew
To their broad breasts, and swift the galley flew.
Up sprung a brisker breeze; with freshening gales
The friendly goddess stretch'd the swelling sails:
We drop our oars; at ease the pilot guides;
The vessel light along the level glides.
When rising sad and slow, with pensive look,
Thus to the melancholy train I spoke:

"O friends, oh ever partners of my woes,
Attend while I what heaven foredooms disclose:
Hear all! fate hangs o'er all! on you it lies
To live, or perish; to be safe, be wise!
"In flowery meads the sportive Sirens play,
Touch the soft lyre, and tune the vocal lay;
Me, me alone, with fetters firmly bound,
The gods allow to hear the dangerous sound.
Hear and obey: if freedom I demand,
Be every fetter strain'd, be added band to band."
'While yet I speak the winged galley flies,
And lo! the Siren shores like mists arise.
Sunk were at once the winds; the air above,
And waves below, at once forgot to move!
Some dæmon calm'd the air, and smooth'd the deep,
Hush'd the loud winds, and charm'd the waves to sleep.
Now every sail we furl, each oar we ply;
Lash'd by the stroke the frothy waters fly.
The ductile wax with busy hands I mould,
And cleft in fragments, and the fragments roll'd;
The' aërial region now grew warm with day,
The wax dissolv'd beneath the burning ray;
Then every ear I barr'd against the strain,
And from excess of frenzy lock'd the brain.
Now round the mast my mates the fetters roll'd,
And bound me limb by limb, with fold on fold.
Then bending to the stroke, the active train
Plunge all at once their oars, and cleave the main.
'While to the shore the rapid vessel flies,
Our swift approach the Siren quire descries;
Celestial music warbles from their tongue,
And thus the sweet deluders tune the song:
"O stay, O pride of Greece! Ulysses, stay!
O cease thy course, and listen to our lay!

Bless'd is the man ordain'd our voice to hear,
The song instructs the soul, and charms the ear.
Approach! thy soul shall into raptures rise!
Approach! and learn new wisdom from the wise!
We know whate'er the kings of mighty name
Atchiev'd at Ilion in the field of fame;
Whate'er beneath the sun's bright journey lies.
O stay, and learn new wisdom from the wise!"

'Thus the sweet charmers warbled o'er the main;
My soul takes wing to meet the heavenly strain;
I give the sign, and struggle to be free:
Swift row my mates, and shoot along the sea!
New chains they add, and rapid urge the way,
Till, dying off, the distant sounds decay:
Then scudding swiftly from the dangerous ground,
The deafen'd ear unlock'd, the chains unbound.

'Now all at once tremendous scenes unfold;
Thunder'd the deeps, the smoking billows roll'd!
Tumultuous waves embroil'd the bellowing flood:
All trembling, deafen'd, and aghast we stood!
No more the vessel plough'd the dreadful wave,
Fear seiz'd the mighty, and unnerv'd the brave;
Each dropp'd his oar: but swift from man to man
With look serene I turn'd, and thus began:
"O friends! Oh often tried in adverse storms!
With ills familiar in more dreadful forms!
Deep in the dire Cyclopean den you lay,
Yet safe return'd—Ulysses led the way.
Learn courage hence! and in my care confide:
Lo! still the same Ulysses is your guide!
Attend my words! your oars incessant ply;
Strain every nerve, and bid the vessel fly.
If from yon justling rocks and wavy war
Jove safety grants, he grants it to your care.

And thou whose guiding hand directs our way,
Pilot, attentive listen and obey;
Bear wide thy course, nor plough those angry waves
Where rolls yon smoke, yon tumbling ocean raves:
Steer by the higher rock; lest whirl'd around
We sink, beneath the circling eddy drown'd."
'While yet I speak, at once their oars they seize,
Stretch to the stroke, and brush the working seas.
Cautious the name of Scylla I suppress'd;
That dreadful sound had chill'd the boldest breast.
'Meantime, forgetful of the voice divine,
All dreadful bright my limbs in armour shine;
High on the deck I take my dangerous stand,
Two glittering javelins lighten in my hand;
Prepar'd to whirl the whizzing spear I stay,
Till the fell fiend arise to seize her prey.
Around the dungeon, studious to behold
The hideous pest, my labouring eyes I roll'd;
In vain! the dismal dungeon, dark as night,
Veils the dire monster, and confounds the sight.
'Now through the rocks, appall'd with deep dismay,
We bend our course, and stem the desperate way;
Dire Scylla there a scene of horror forms,
And here Charybdis fills the deep with storms.
When the tide rushes from her rumbling caves
The rough rock roars; tumultuous boil the waves;
They toss, they foam, a wild confusion raise,
Like waters bubbling o'er the fiery blaze;
Eternal mists obscure the' aërial plain,
And high above the rock she spouts the main!
When in her gulfs the rushing sea subsides,
She drains the ocean with the refluent tides:

The rock rebellows with a thund'ring sound;
Deep, wondrous deep below, appears the ground.
'Struck with despair, with trembling hearts we view'd
The yawning dungeon, and the tumbling flood;
When lo! fierce Scylla stoop'd to seize her prey,
Stretch'd her dire jaws, and swept six men away;
Chiefs of renown! loud echoing shrieks arise;
I turn and view them quivering in the skies;
They call, and aid with outstretch'd arms implore:
In vain they call! those arms are stretch'd no more.
As from some rock that overhangs the flood,
The silent fisher casts the insidious food,
With fraudful care he waits the finny prize,
And sudden lifts it quivering to the skies:
So the foul monster lifts her prey on high,
So pant the wretches, struggling in the sky;
In the wide dungeon she devours her food,
And the flesh trembles while she churns the blood.
Worn as I am with griefs, with care decay'd;
Never, I never, scene so dire survey'd!
My shivering blood, congeal'd, forgot to flow:
Aghast I stood, a monument of woe!
'Now from the rocks the rapid vessel flies,
And the hoarse din like distant thunder dies;
To Sol's bright isle our voyage we pursue,
And now the glittering mountains rise to view.
There, sacred to the radiant god of day,
Graze the fair herds, the flocks promiscuous stray;
Then suddenly was heard along the main
To low the ox, to bleat the woolly train!
Straight to my anxious thoughts the sound convey'd
The words of Circe and the Theban shade;

Warn'd by their awful voice these shores to shun,
With cautious fears oppress'd, I thus begun:
"O friends! Oh ever exercis'd in care!
Hear heaven's commands, and reverence what ye hear!
To fly these shores the prescient Theban shade
And Circe warns! O be their voice obey'd!
Some mighty woe relentless heaven forebodes:
Fly these dire regions, and revere the gods!"
'While yet I spoke, a sudden sorrow ran
Through every breast, and spread from man to man,
Till wrathful thus Eurylochus began:
"O cruel thou! some fury sure has steel'd
That stubborn soul, by toil untaught to yield!
From sleep debarr'd, we sink from woes to woes;
And, cruel, enviest thou a short repose?
Still must we restless rove, new seas explore,
The sun descending, and so near the shore?
And lo! the night begins her gloomy reign,
And doubles all the terrors of the main.
Oft in the dead of night loud winds arise,
Lash the wild surge, and blister in the skies;
Oh should the fierce south-west his rage display,
And toss with rising storms the watry way,
Though gods descend from heaven's aërial plain
To lend us aid, the gods descend in vain:
Then while the night displays her awful shade,
Sweet time of slumber! be the night obey'd!
Haste ye to land! and when the morning ray
Sheds her bright beams, pursue the destin'd way."
'A sudden joy in every bosom rose;
So will'd some demon, minister of woes!
'To whom with grief: "O swift to be undone,
Constrain'd I act what wisdom bid me shun.

But yonder herds and yonder flocks forbear;
Attest the heavens, and call the gods to hear:
Content, an innocent repast display,
By Circe given, and fly the dangerous prey."
'Thus I: and while to shore the vessel flies,
With hands uplifted they attest the skies;
Then where a fountain's gurgling waters play,
They rush to land, and end in feasts the day:
They feed; they quaff; and now (their hunger fled)
Sigh for their friends devour'd, and mourn the dead.
Nor cease the tears, till each in slumber shares
A sweet forgetfulness of human cares.
'Now far the night advanc'd her gloomy reign,
And setting stars roll'd down the azure plain:
When, at the voice of Jove, wild whirlwinds rise,
And clouds and double darkness veil the skies;
The moon, the stars, the bright ethereal host,
Seem as extinct, and all their splendours lost;
The furious tempest roars with dreadful sound:
Air thunders, rolls the ocean, groans the ground.
All night it rag'd; when morning rose, to land
We haul'd our bark, and moor'd it on the strand,
Where in a beauteous grotto's cool recess
Dance the green Nereids of the neighbouring seas.
'There while the wild winds whistled o'er the main,
Thus careful I address'd the listening train:
"O friends, be wise! nor dare the flocks destroy
Of these fair pastures:—if ye touch, ye die.
Warn'd by the high command of heaven, be aw'd;
Holy the flocks, and dreadful is the god!
That god who spreads the radiant beams of light,
And views wide earth and heaven's unmeasur'd
height."

'And now the moon had run her monthly round,
The south-east blustering with a dreadful sound;
Unhurt the beeves, untouch'd the woolly train,
Low through the grove, or range the flowery plain:
Then fail'd our food; then fish we make our prey,
Or fowl that screaming haunt the watry way.
Till now from sea or flood no succour found,
Famine and meagre want besieg'd us round.
Pensive and pale from grove to grove I stray'd,
From the loud storms to find a silvan shade;
There o'er my hands the living wave I pour;
And heaven and heaven's immortal thrones adore,
To calm the roarings of the stormy main,
And grant me peaceful to my realms again.
Then o'er my eyes the gods soft slumber shed,
While thus Eurylochus, arising, said:
"O friends, a thousand ways frail mortals lead
To the cold tomb, and dreadful all to tread;
But dreadful most, when by a slow decay
Pale hunger wastes the manly strength away.
Why cease ye then to' implore the powers above,
And offer hecatombs to thundering Jove?
Why seize ye not yon beeves, and fleecy prey?
Arise unanimous; arise and slay!
And if the gods ordain a safe return,
To Phœbus shrines shall rise, and altars burn.
But should the powers that o'er mankind preside,
Decree to plunge us in the whelming tide,
Better to rush at once to shades below,
Than linger life away, and nourish woe!"
'Thus he: the beeves around securely stray,
When swift to ruin they invade the prey;
They seize, they kill!—but for the rite divine,
The barley fail'd, and for libations, wine.

Swift from the oak they strip the shady pride;
And verdant leaves the flowery cake supplied.
'With prayer they now address the' ethereal train,
Slay the selected beeves, and flay the slain;
The thighs, with fat involv'd, divide with art,
Strew'd o'er with morsels cut from every part.
Water, instead of wine, is brought in urns,
And pour'd profanely as the victim burns.
The thighs thus offer'd, and the entrails dress'd,
They roast the fragments and prepare the feast.
'Twas then soft slumber fled my troubled brain;
Back to the bark I speed along the main.
When lo! an odour from the feast exhales,
Spreads o'er the coast, and scents the tainted gales;
A chilly fear congeal'd my vital blood,
And thus, obtesting heaven, I mourn'd aloud:
"O sire of men and gods, immortal Jove!
Oh all ye blissful powers that reign above!
Why were my cares beguil'd in short repose?
O fatal slumber, paid with lasting woes!
A deed so dreadful all the gods alarms,
Vengeance is on the wing, and heaven in arms!"
'Meantime Lampetie mounts the' aërial way,
And kindles into rage the god of day:
"Vengeance, ye powers (he cries), and thou whose hand
Aims the red bolt, and hurls the writhen brand!
Slain are those herds which I with pride survey,
When through the ports of heaven I pour the day,
Or deep in ocean plunge the burning ray.
Vengeance, ye gods! or I the skies forego,
And bear the lamp of heaven to shades below."
'To whom the thundering power: "O source of day!
Whose radiant lamp adorns the azure way,

Still may thy beams through heaven's bright portals
The joy of earth, and glory of the skies; [rise,
Lo! my red arm I bare, my thunders guide,
To dash the' offenders in the whelming tide."
'To fair Calypso from the bright abodes,
Hermes convey'd these councils of the gods.
'Meantime from man to man my tongue exclaims,
My wrath is kindled, and my soul in flames.
In vain! I view perform'd the direful deed,
Beeves, slain by heaps, along the ocean bleed.
'Now heaven gave signs of wrath; along the ground
Crept the raw hides, and with a bellowing sound
Roar'd the dead limbs; the burning entrails groan'd.
Six guilty days my wretched mates employ
In impious feasting, and unhallow'd joy:
The seventh arose, and now the sire of gods
Rein'd the rough storms, and calm'd the tossing floods;
With speed the bark we climb; the spacious sails
Loos'd from the yards invite th' impelling gales.
Past sight of shore along the surge we bound,
And all above is sky, and ocean all around!
When lo! a murky cloud the thunderer forms
Full o'er our heads, and blackens heaven with storms.
Night dwells o'er all the deep: and now out flies
The gloomy west, and whistles in the skies.
The mountain-billows roar! the furious blast
Howls o'er the shroud, and rends it from the mast:
The mast gives way, and crackling as it bends,
Tears up the deck; then all at once descends:
The pilot by the tumbling ruin slain,
Dash'd from the helm, falls headlong in the main.
Then Jove in anger bids his thunders roll,
And forky lightnings flash from pole to pole;

Fierce at our heads his deadly bolt he aims,
Red with uncommon wrath, and wrapt in flames;
Full on the bark it fell: now high, now low,
Toss'd and retoss'd, it reel'd beneath the blow;
At once into the main the crew it shook:
Sulphureous odours rose, and smouldering smoke.
Like fowl that haunt the floods, they sink, they rise,
Now lost, now seen, with shrieks and dreadful cries;
And strive to gain the bark; but Jove denies.
Firm at the helm I stand, when fierce the main
Rush'd with dire noise, and dash'd the sides in twain;
Again impetuous drove the furious blast,
Snapt the strong helm, and bore to sea the mast.
Firm to the mast with cords the helm I bind,
And ride aloft, to Providence resign'd,
Through tumbling billows, and a war of wind.
'Now sunk the west, and now a southern breeze,
More dreadful than the tempest, lash'd the seas;
For on the rocks it bore where Scylla raves,
And dire Charybdis rolls her thundering waves.
All night I drove; and, at the dawn of day,
Fast by the rocks beheld the desperate way:
Just when the sea within her gulfs subsides,
And in the roaring whirlpools rush the tides,
Swift from the float I vaulted with a bound,
The lofty fig-tree seiz'd, and clung around;
So to the beam the bat tenacious clings,
And pendent round it clasps his leathern wings.
High in the air the tree its boughs display'd,
And o'er the dungeon cast a dreadful shade;
All unsustain'd between the wave and sky,
Beneath my feet the whirling billows fly,

What time the judge forsakes the noisy bar
To take repast, and stills the wordy war,
Charybdis, rumbling from her inmost caves,
The mast refunded on her refluent waves.
Swift from the tree, the floating mast to gain,
Sudden I dropp'd amidst the flashing main;
Once more undaunted on the ruin rode,
And oar'd with labouring arms along the flood.
Unseen I pass'd by Scylla's dire abodes:
So Jove decreed (dread sire of men and gods);
Then nine long days I plough'd the calmer seas,
Heav'd by the surge, and wafted by the breeze.
Weary and wet the' Ogygian shores I gain,
When the tenth sun descended to the main.
There in Calypso's ever-fragrant bowers
Refresh'd I lay, and joy beguil'd the hours.
'My following fates to thee, O king, are known,
And the bright partner of thy royal throne.
Enough; in misery can words avail?
And what so tedious as a twice-told tale?'

THE

THIRTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE ARRIVAL OF ULYSSES IN ITHACA.

ULYSSES takes his leave of Alcinous and Arete, and embarks in the evening. Next morning the ship arrives at Ithaca; where the sailors, as Ulysses is yet sleeping, lay him on the shore with all his treasures. On their return, Neptune changes their ship into a rock. In the mean time Ulysses, awaking, knows not his native Ithaca, by reason of a mist which Pallas had cast round him. He breaks into loud lamentations; till the goddess, appearing to him in the form of a shepherd, discovers the country to him, and points out the particular places. He then tells a feigned story of his adventures, upon which she manifests herself, and they consult together of the measures to be taken to destroy the suitors. To conceal his return, and disguise his person the more effectually, she changes him into the figure of an old beggar.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XIII.

He ceas'd; but left so pleasing on their ear
His voice, that listening still they seem'd to hear.
A pause of silence hush'd the shady rooms:
The grateful conference then the king resumes:
'Whatever toils the great Ulysses pass'd,
Beneath this happy roof they end at last;
No longer now from shore to shore to roam,
Smooth seas, and gentle winds, invite him home.
But hear me, princes! whom these walls inclose,
For whom my chanter sings, and goblet flows
With wine unmix'd (an honour due to age,
To cheer the grave, and warm the poet's rage):
Though labour'd gold and many a dazzling vest
Lie heap'd already for our godlike guest;
Without new treasures let him not remove,
Large, and expressive of the public love:
Each peer a tripod, each a vase bestow,
A general tribute, which the state shall owe.'
This sentence pleas'd: then all their steps address'd
To separate mansions, and retir'd to rest.
Now did the rosy-finger'd morn arise,
And shed her sacred light along the skies.

Down to the haven and the ships in haste
They bore the treasures, and in safety plac'd.
The king himself the vases rang'd with care:
Then bade his followers to the feast repair.
A victim ox beneath the sacred hand
Of great Alcinous falls, and stains the sand.
To Jove the eternal (power above all powers!
Who wings the winds, and darkens heaven with showers),
The flames ascend: till evening they prolong
The rites, more sacred made by heavenly song:
For in the midst, with public honours grac'd,
Thy lyre divine, Demodocus! was plac'd.
All, but Ulysses, heard with fix'd delight:
He sat, and ey'd the sun, and wish'd the night;
Slow seem'd the sun to move, the hours to roll,
His native home deep imag'd in his soul.
As the tir'd ploughman spent with stubborn toil,
Whose oxen long have torn the furrow'd soil,
Sees with delight the sun's declining ray,
When home, with feeble knees, he bends his way
To late repast (the day's hard labour done):
So to Ulysses welcome set the sun.
Then instant, to Alcinous and the rest
(The Scherian states) he turn'd, and thus address'd:
'O thou, the first in merit and command!
And you the peers and princes of the land!
May every joy be yours! nor this the least,
When due libation shall have crown'd the feast,
Safe to my home to send your happy guest.
Complete are now the bounties you have given,
Be all those bounties but confirm'd by heaven!
So may I find, when all my wanderings cease,
My consort blameless, and my friends in peace.

On you be every bliss; and every day,
In home-felt joys delighted, roll away;
Yourselves, your wives, your long-descending race,
May every god enrich with every grace!
Sure fix'd on virtue may your nation stand,
And public evil never touch the land!' [prov'd
His words well weigh'd, the general voice ap-
Benign, and instant his dismission mov'd.
The monarch to Pontonous gave the sign,
To fill the goblet high with rosy wine
'Great Jove the father, first (he cried) implore;
Then send the stranger to his native shore.'
The luscious wine the' obedient herald brought;
Around the mansion flow'd the purple draught:
Each from his seat to each immortal pours,
Whom glory circles in the' Olympian bowers.
Ulysses sole with air majestic stands,
The bowl presenting to Arete's hands;
Then thus: 'O queen, farewell! be still possess'd
Of dear remembrance, blessing still and bless'd!
Till age and death shall gently call thee hence:
(Sure fate of every mortal excellence!)
Farewell! and joys successive ever spring
To thee, to thine, the people, and the king!'
Thus he; then parting prints the sandy shore
To the fair port: a herald march'd before,
Sent by Alcinous: of Arete's train
Three chosen maids attend him to the main;
This does a tunic and white vest convey,
A various casket that, of rich inlay,
And bread and wine the third. The cheerful mates
Safe in the hollow poop dispose the cates:
Upon the deck, soft painted robes they spread,
With linen cover'd, for the hero's bed.

He climb'd the lofty stern; then gently press'd
The swelling couch, and lay compos'd to rest.
Now plac'd in order, the Phæacian train
Their cables loose, and launch into the main:
At once they bend, and strike their equal oars,
And leave the sinking hills, and lessening shores.
While on the deck the chief in silence lies,
And pleasing slumbers steal upon his eyes.
As fiery coursers in the rapid race,
Urg'd by fierce drivers through the dusty space,
Toss their high heads, and scour along the plain;
So mounts the bounding vessel o'er the main.
Back to the stern the parted billows flow,
And the black ocean foams and roars below.
Thus with spread sails the winged galley flies;
Less swift an eagle cuts the liquid skies:
Divine Ulysses was her sacred load,
A man in wisdom equal to a god!
Much danger, long and mighty toils he bore,
In storms by sea, and combats on the shore;
All which soft sleep now banish'd from his breast,
Wrapt in a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.
But when the morning star with early ray
Flam'd in the front of heaven, and promis'd day;
Like distant clouds the mariner descries,
Fair Ithaca's emerging hills arise.
Far from the town a spacious port appears,
Sacred to Phorcys' power, whose name it bears:
Two craggy rocks projecting to the main,
The roaring wind's tempestuous rage restrain;
Within, the waves in softer murmurs glide,
And ships secure without their halsers ride.
High at the head a branching olive grows,
And crowns the pointed cliffs with shady boughs.

Beneath, a gloomy grotto's cool recess
Delights the Nereids of the neighbouring seas;
Where bowls and urns were form'd of living stone,
And massy beams in native marble shone;
On which the labours of the nymphs were roll'd,
Their webs divine of purple mix'd with gold.
Within the cave, the clustering bees attend
Their waxen works, or from the roof depend.
Perpetual waters o'er the pavement glide;
Two marble doors unfold on either side;
Sacred the south, by which the gods descend,
But mortals enter at the northern end.

Thither they bent, and haul'd their ship to land
(The crooked keel divides the yellow sand);
Ulysses sleeping on his couch they bore,
And gently plac'd him on the rocky shore.
His treasures next, Alcinous' gifts, they laid
In the wild olive's unfrequented shade,
Secure from theft: then launch'd the bark again,
Resum'd their oars, and measur'd back the main.

Nor yet forgot old Ocean's dread supreme
The vengeance vow'd for eyeless Polypheme.
Before the throne of mighty Jove he stood;
And sought the secret counsels of the god.

'Shall then no more, O sire of gods! be mine
The rights and honours of a power divine?
Scorn'd e'en by man, and (oh severe disgrace)
By soft Phæacians, my degenerate race!
Against yon destin'd head in vain I swore,
And menac'd vengeance, ere he reach'd his shore;
To reach his natal shore was thy decree;
Mild I obey'd, for who shall war with thee?
Behold him landed, careless and asleep,
From all the' eluded dangers of the deep!

Lo, where he lies, amidst a shining store
Of brass, rich garments, and refulgent ore;
And bears triumphant to his native isle
A prize more worth than Ilion's noble spoil.'
  To whom the father of the' immortal powers,
Who swells the clouds, and gladdens earth with showers:
Can mighty Neptune thus of man complain?
Neptune, tremendous o'er the boundless main!
Rever'd and awful e'en in heaven's abodes,
Ancient and great! a god above the gods!
If that low race offend thy power divine,
(Weak, daring creatures!) is not vengeance thine?
Go, then, the guilty at thy will chastise.'
He said: the shaker of the earth replies:
  'This then I doom; to fix the gallant ship
A mark of vengeance on the sable deep:
To warn the thoughtless self-confiding train,
No more unlicens'd thus to brave the main.
Full in their port a shady hill shall rise,
If such thy will.'—'We will it, (Jove replies)
E'en when with transport blackening all the strand,
The swarming people hail their ship to land,
Fix her for ever, a memorial stone:
Still let her seem to sail, and seem alone;
The trembling crowds shall see the sudden shade
Of whelming mountains overhang their head!'
  With that, the god whose earthquakes rock the ground,
Fierce to Phæacia cross'd the vast profound.
Swift as a swallow sweeps the liquid way,
The winged pinnace shot along the sea.
The god arrests her with a sudden stroke,
And roots her down an everlasting rock.

Aghast the Scherians stand in deep surprise;
All press to speak, all question with their eyes.
What hands unseen the rapid bark restrain!
And yet it swims, or seems to swim, the main!
Thus they, unconscious of the deed divine:
Till great Alcinous, rising, own'd the sign.
'Behold the long-predestin'd day! (he cries)
O certain faith of ancient prophecies!
These ears have heard my royal sire disclose
A dreadful story, big with future woes;
How, mov'd with wrath that careless we convey
Promiscuous every guest to every bay,
Stern Neptune rag'd; and how by his command
Firm rooted in the surge a ship should stand;
(A monument of wrath) and mound on mound
Should hide our walls, or whelm beneath the ground.
'The fates have follow'd as declar'd the seer.
Be humbled, nations! and your monarch hear:
No more unlicens'd brave the deeps, no more
With every stranger pass from shore to shore;
On angry Neptune now for mercy call:
To his high name let twelve black oxen fall.
So may the god reverse his purpos'd will,
Nor o'er our city hang the dreadful hill.'
The monarch spoke: they trembled and obey'd,
Forth on the sands the victim oxen led:
The gather'd tribes before the altars stand,
And chiefs and rulers, a majestic band.
The king of ocean all the tribes implore;
The blazing altars redden all the shore.
Meanwhile Ulysses in his country lay,
Releas'd from sleep, and round him might survey
The solitary shore, and rolling sea.

Yet had his mind through tedious absence lost
The dear remembrance of his native coast;
Besides, Minerva, to secure her care,
Diffus'd around a veil of thicken'd air:
For so the gods ordain'd to keep unseen
His royal person from his friends and queen;
Till the proud suitors for their crimes afford
An ample vengeance to their injur'd lord.
  Now all the land another prospect bore,
Another port appear'd, another shore,
And long-continued ways, and winding floods,
And unknown mountains, crown'd with unknown woods.
Pensive and slow, with sudden grief oppress'd
The king arose, and beat his careful breast;
Cast a long look o'er all the coast and main,
And sought, around, his native realm in vain:
Then with erected eyes stood fix'd in woe,
And as he spoke, the tears began to flow.
  'Ye gods! (he cried) upon what barren coast,
In what new region, is Ulysses tost?
Possess'd by wild barbarians, fierce in arms?
Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms?
Where shall this treasure now in safety lie?
And whither, whither its sad owner fly?
Ah why did I Alcinous' grace implore?
Ah why forsake Phæacia's happy shore?
Some juster prince perhaps had entertain'd,
And safe restor'd me to my native land.
Is this the promis'd, long-expected coast,
And this the faith Phæacia's rulers boast?
Oh righteous gods! of all the great, how few
Are just to heaven, and to their promise true!

But he, the power to whose all-seeing eyes
The deeds of men appear without disguise,
'Tis his alone to' avenge the wrongs I bear:
For still the' oppress'd are his peculiar care.
To count these presents, and from thence to prove
Their faith, is mine: the rest belongs to Jove.'
Then on the sands he rang'd his wealthy store,
The gold, the vests, the tripods, number'd o'er:
All these he found, but still, in error lost,
Disconsolate he wanders on the coast,
Sighs for his country, and laments again
To the deaf rocks, and hoarse-resounding main.
When lo! the guardian goddess of the wise,
Celestial Pallas, stood before his eyes;
In show a youthful swain, of form divine,
Who seem'd descended from some princely line;
A graceful robe her slender body dress'd,
Around her shoulders flew the waving vest,
Her decent hand a shining javelin bore,
And painted sandals on her feet she wore.
To whom the king: 'Whoe'er of human race
Thou art, that wand'rest in this desert place!
With joy to thee, as to some god, I bend,
To thee my treasures and myself commend.
O tell a wretch in exile doom'd to stray,
What air I breathe, what country I survey?
The fruitful continent's extremest bound,
Or some fair isle which Neptune's arms surround?'
'From what fair clime (said she) remote from fame
Arriv'st thou here, a stranger to our name?
Thou seest an island, not to those unknown
Whose hills are brighten'd by the rising sun,
Nor those that plac'd beneath his utmost reign
Behold him sinking in the western main.

The rugged soil allows no level space
For flying chariots, or the rapid race;
Yet not ungrateful to the peasant's pain,
Suffices fulness to the swelling grain:
The loaded trees their various fruits produce,
And clustering grapes afford a generous juice:
Woods crown our mountains, and in every grove
The bounding goats and frisking heifers rove:
Soft rains and kindly dews refresh the field,
And rising springs eternal verdure yield.
E'en to those shores is Ithaca renown'd,
Where Troy's majestic ruins strow the ground.'
At this, the chief with transport was possess'd,
His panting heart exulted in his breast;
Yet well dissembling his untimely joys,
And veiling truth in plausible disguise,
Thus, with an air sincere, in fiction bold,
His ready tale the' inventive hero told.
'Oft have I heard in Crete this island's name;
For 'twas from Crete, my native soil, I came;
Self-banish'd thence. I sail'd before the wind,
And left my children and my friends behind.
From fierce Idomeneus' revenge I flew,
Whose son, the swift Orsilochus, I slew:
(With brutal force he seiz'd my Trojan prey,
Due to the toils of many a bloody day)
Unseen I 'scap'd; and favour'd by the night
In a Phœnician vessel took my flight,
For Pyle or Elis bound: but tempests toss'd,
And raging billows drove us on your coast.
In dead of night an unknown port we gain'd,
Spent with fatigue, and slept secure on land.
But ere the rosy morn renew'd the day,
While in the' embrace of pleasing sleep I lay,

Sudden, invited by auspicious gales,
They land my goods, and hoist their flying sails.
Abandon'd here, my fortune I deplore,
A hapless exile on a foreign shore.'

Thus while he spoke, the blue-ey'd maid began
With pleasing smiles to view the godlike man:
Then chang'd her form; and now, divinely bright,
Jove's heavenly daughter stood confess'd to sight:
Like a fair virgin in her beauty's bloom,
Skill'd in the' illustrious labours of the loom.

'O still the same Ulysses! she rejoin'd,
In useful craft successfully refin'd!
Artful in speech, in action, and in mind!
Suffic'd it not, that, thy long labours pass'd,
Secure thou seest thy native shore at last?
But this to me? who, like thyself, excel
In arts of counsel, and dissembling well.
To me, whose wit exceeds the powers divine,
No less than mortals are surpass'd by thine.
Know'st thou not me? who made thy life my care,
Through ten years' wandering, and through ten years' war;
Who taught thee arts, Alcinous to persuade,
To raise his wonder, and engage his aid;
And now appear, thy treasures to protect,
Conceal thy person, thy designs direct,
And tell what more thou must from fate expect:
Domestic woes far heavier to be borne!
The pride of fools, and slaves' insulting scorn.
But thou be silent, nor reveal thy state;
Yield to the force of unresisted fate,
And bear unmov'd the wrongs of base mankind,
The last, and hardest, conquest of the mind.'

'Goddess of Wisdom! (Ithacus replies,)
He who discerns thee must be truly wise,
So seldom view'd, and ever in disguise!
When the bold Argives led their warring powers
Against proud Ilion's well-defended towers,
Ulysses was thy care, celestial maid!
Grac'd with thy sight, and favour'd with thy aid.
But when the Trojan piles in ashes lay,
And bound for Greece we plough'd the watery way;
Our fleet dispers'd and driven from coast to coast,
Thy sacred presence from that hour I lost:
Till I beheld thy radiant form once more,
And heard thy counsels on Phæacia's shore.
But, by the' almighty author of thy race,
Tell me, O tell, is this my native place?
For much I fear, long tracts of land and sea
Divide this coast from distant Ithaca;
The sweet delusion kindly you impose,
To soothe my hopes, and mitigate my woes,'
Thus he. The blue-ey'd goddess thus replies:
'How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise!
Who, vers'd in fortune, fear the flattering show,
And taste not half the bliss the gods bestow.
The more shall Pallas aid thy just desires,
And guard the wisdom which herself inspires.
Others, long absent from their native place,
Straight seek their home, and fly with eager pace
To their wives' arms, and children's dear embrace.
Not thus Ulysses: he decrees to prove
His subjects' faith, and queen's suspected love;
Who mourn'd her lord twice ten revolving years,
And wastes the days in grief, the nights in tears.
But Pallas knew (thy friends and navy lost)
Once more 'twas given thee to behold thy coast:

Yet how could I with adverse fate engage,
And mighty Neptune's unrelenting rage?
Now lift thy longing eyes, while I restore
The pleasing prospect of thy native shore.
Behold the port of Phorcys! fenc'd around
With rocky mountains, and with olives crown'd.
Behold the gloomy grot! whose cool recess
Delights the Nereids of the neighbouring seas:
Whose now-neglected altars, in thy reign
Blush'd with the blood of sheep and oxen slain.
Behold! where Neritus the clouds divides,
And shakes the waving forests on his sides.'

So spake the goddess, and the prospect clear'd,
The mists dispers'd, and all the coast appear'd.
The king with joy confess'd his place of birth,
And on his knees salutes his mother earth:
Then, with his suppliant hands upheld in air,
Thus to the sea-green sisters sends his pray'r:

'All hail! ye virgin daughters of the main!
Ye streams, beyond my hopes beheld again!
To you once more your own Ulysses bows;
Attend his transports, and receive his vows!
If Jove prolong my days, and Pallas crown
The growing virtues of my youthful son,
To you shall rites divine be ever paid,
And grateful offerings on your altars laid.'

Then thus Minerva: 'From that anxious breast
Dismiss those cares, and leave to heaven the rest.
Our task be now thy treasur'd stores to save,
Deep in the close recesses of the cave:
Then future means consult'—she spoke, and trod
The shady grot, that brighten'd with the god.
The closest caverns of the grot she sought;
The gold, the brass, the robes, Ulysses brought;

These in the secret gloom the chief dispos'd;
The entrance with a rock the goddess clos'd.
Now, seated in the olive's sacred shade,
Confer the hero and the martial maid.
The goddess of the azure eyes began:—
'Son of Laertes! much-experienc'd man!
The suitor-train thy earliest care demand,
Of that luxurious race to rid the land:
Three years thy house their lawless rule has seen,
And proud addresses to the matchless queen.
But she thy absence mourns from day to day,
And inly bleeds, and silent wastes away:
Elusive of the bridal hour, she gives
Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.
To this Ulysses: 'O celestial maid!
Prais'd be thy counsel, and thy timely aid:
Else had I seen my native walls in vain,
Like great Atrides just restor'd and slain.
Vouchsafe the means of vengeance to debate,
And plan with all thy arts the scene of fate.
Then, then be present, and my soul inspire,
As when we wrapt Troy's heaven-built walls in fire.
Though leagued against me hundred heroes stand,
Hundreds shall fall, if Pallas aid my hand.'
She answer'd: 'In the dreadful day of fight
Know, I am with thee, strong in all my might.
If thou but equal to thyself be found,
What gasping numbers then shall press the ground!
What human victims stain the feastful floor!
How wide the pavements float with guilty gore!
It fits thee now to wear a dark disguise,
And secret walk, unknown to mortal eyes.
For this, my hand shall wither every grace,
And every elegance of form and face,

O'er thy smooth skin a bark of wrinkles spread,
Turn hoar the auburn honours of thy head,
Disfigure every limb with coarse attire,
And in thy eyes extinguish all the fire;
Add all the wants and the decays of life,
Estrange thee from thy own, thy son, thy wife;
From the loath'd object every sight shall turn,
And the blind suitors their destruction scorn.
'Go first the master of thy herds to find,
True to his charge, a loyal swain and kind:
For thee he sighs; and to the royal heir,
And chaste Penelope, extends his care.
At the Coracian rock he now resides,
Where Arethusa's sable water glides;
The sable water and the copious mast
Swell the fat herd; luxuriant, large repast!
With him, rest peaceful in the rural cell,
And all you ask his faithful tongue shall tell.
Me into other realms my cares convey,
To Sparta, still with female beauty gay:
For know, to Sparta thy lov'd offspring came,
To learn thy fortunes from the voice of fame.'
At this the father, with a father's care:
'Must he too suffer, he, O goddess! bear
Of wanderings and of woes a wretched share?
Through the wild ocean plough the dangerous way,
And leave his fortunes and his house a prey?
Why would'st not thou, oh all-enlighten'd mind
Inform him certain, and protect him, kind?'
To whom Minerva: 'Be thy soul at rest;
And know, whatever heaven ordains, is best.
To fame I sent him, to acquire renown:
To other regions is his virtue known.

Secure he sits, near great Atrides plac'd;
With friendships strengthen'd, and with honours grac'd.
But lo! an ambush waits his passage o'er;
Fierce foes insidious intercept the shore:
In vain! far sooner all the murderous brood
This injur'd land shall fatten with their blood.'
She spake, then touch'd him with her powerful wand:
The skin shrunk up, and wither'd at her hand:
A swift old age o'er all his members spread;
A sudden frost was sprinkled on his head;
Nor longer in the heavy eye-ball shin'd
The glance divine, forth-beaming from the mind.
His robe, which spots indelible besmear,
In rags dishonest flutters with the air:
A stag's torn hide is lap'd around his reins;
A rugged staff his trembling hand sustains;
And at his side a wretched scrip was hung,
Wide-patch'd, and knotted to a twisted thong.
So look'd the chief, so mov'd! to mortal eyes
Object uncouth! a man of miseries!
While Pallas, cleaving the wide fields of air,
To Sparta flies, Telemachus her care.

THE

FOURTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

ARGUMENT.

THE CONVERSATION WITH EUMÆUS.

ULYSSES arrives in disguise at the house of Eumæus, where he is received, entertained, and lodged, with the utmost hospitality. The several discourses of that faithful old servant, with the feigned story told by Ulysses to conceal himself, and other conversations on various subjects, take up this entire book.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XIV.

But he, deep musing, o'er the mountains stray'd
Through mazy thickets of the woodland shade,
And cavern'd ways, the shaggy coast along,
With cliffs and nodding forests overhung.
Eumæus at his silvan lodge he sought,
A faithful servant, and without a fault.
Ulysses found him busied, as he sat
Before the threshold of his rustic gate;
Around the mansion in a circle shone
A rural portico of rugged stone:
(In absence of his lord, with honest toil
His own industrious hands had rais'd the pile)
The wall was stone from neighbouring quarries borne,
Encircled with a fence of native thorn,
And strong with pales, by many a weary stroke
Of stubborn labour hewn from heart of oak;
Frequent and thick. Within the space were rear'd
Twelve ample cells, the lodgments of his herd.
Full fifty pregnant females each contain'd;
The males without (a smaller race) remain'd;
Doom'd to supply the suitor's wasteful feast,
A stock by daily luxury decreas'd;

Now scarce four hundred left. These to defend,
Four savage dogs, a watchful guard, attend.
Here sat Eumæus, and his cares applied
To form strong buskins of well-season'd hide.
Of four assistants who his labour share,
Three now were absent on the rural care;
The fourth drove victims to the suitor-train:
But he, of ancient faith, a simple swain,
Sigh'd, while he furnish'd the luxurious board,
And wearied heaven with wishes for his lord.

Soon as Ulysses near the' enclosure drew,
With open mouths the furious mastiffs flew:
Down sat the sage; and cautious to withstand,
Let fall the' offensive truncheon from his hand.
Sudden the master runs; aloud he calls;
And from his hasty hand the leather falls;
With showers of stones he drives them far away;
The scattering dogs around at distance bay.

'Unhappy stranger! (thus the faithful swain
Began with accents gracious and humane)
What sorrow had been mine, if at my gate
Thy reverend age had met a shameful fate?
Enough of woes already have I known;
Enough my master's sorrows and my own.
While here (ungrateful task!) his herds I feed,
Ordain'd for lawless rioters to bleed;
Perhaps, supported at another's board,
Far from his country roams my hapless lord;
Or sigh'd in exile forth his latest breath,
Now cover'd with the' eternal shade of death!

'But enter this my homely roof, and see
Our woods not void of hospitality:
Then tell me whence thou art? and what the share
Of woes and wanderings thou wert born to bear?'

He said; and seconding the kind request,
With friendly step precedes his unknown guest;
A shaggy goat's soft hide beneath him spread,
And with fresh rushes heap'd an ample bed.
Joy touch'd the hero's tender soul, to find
So just reception from a heart so kind:
'And oh, ye gods! with all your blessings grace
(He thus broke forth) this friend of human race!'
The swain replied: 'It never was our guise
To slight the poor, or aught humane despise;
For Jove unfolds our hospitable door,
'Tis Jove that sends the stranger and the poor.
Little, alas! is all the good I can;
A man oppress'd, dependent, yet a man:
Accept such treatment as a swain affords,
Slave to the insolence of youthful lords!
Far hence is by unequal gods remov'd
That man of bounties, loving and belov'd!
To whom whate'er his slave enjoys is ow'd,
And more, had fate allow'd, had been bestow'd:
But fate condemn'd him to a foreign shore;
Much have I sorrow'd, but my master more.
Now cold he lies, to death's embrace resign'd:
Ah, perish Helen! perish all her kind!
For whose curs'd cause, in Agamemnon's name,
He trod so fatally the paths of fame.'
His vest succinct then girding round his waist,
Forth rush'd the swain with hospitable haste,
Straight to the lodgments of his herd he run,
Where the fat porkers slept beneath the sun;
Of two, his cutlass launch'd the spouting blood;
These quarter'd, sing'd, and fix'd on forks of wood,
All hasty on the hissing coals he threw;
And smoking back the tasteful viands drew,

Broachers and all; then on the board display'd
The ready meal, before Ulysses laid,
With flour imbrown'd; next mingled wine yet new,
And luscious as the bee's nectareous dew:
Then sat companion of the friendly feast,
With open look; and thus bespoke his guest:
'Take with free welcome what our hands prepare,
Such food as falls to simple servants' share;
The best our lords consume; those thoughtless peers,
Rich without bounty, guilty without fears!
Yet sure the gods their impious acts detest,
And honour justice and the righteous breast.
Pirates and conquerors, of harden'd mind,
The foes of peace, and scourges of mankind,
To whom offending men are made a prey
When Jove in vengeance gives a land away;
E'en these, when of their ill-got spoils possess'd,
Find sure tormentors in the guilty breast;
Some voice of God close whispering from within,
"Wretch! this is villany, and this is sin."
But these, no doubt, some oracle explore,
That tells, the great Ulysses is no more.
Hence springs their confidence, and from our sighs
Their rapine strengthens, and their riots rise:
Constant as Jove the night and day bestows,
Bleeds a whole hecatomb, a vintage flows.
None match'd this hero's wealth, of all who reign
O'er the fair islands of the neighbouring main,
Nor all the monarchs whose far-dreaded sway
The wide-extended continents obey:
First on the main land, of Ulysses' breed
Twelve herds, twelve flocks, on ocean's margin feed;
As many stalls for shaggy goats are rear'd;
As many lodgments for the tusky herd;

Those foreign keepers guard: and here are seen
Twelve herds of goats that grace our utmost green;
To native pastors is their charge assign'd;
And mine the care to feed the bristly kind:
Each day the fattest bleeds of either herd,
All to the suitors' wasteful board preferr'd.'

Thus he, benevolent: his unknown guest
With hunger keen devours the savoury feast;
While schemes of vengeance ripen in his breast.
Silent and thoughtful while the board he ey'd,
Eumæus pours on high the purple tide;
The king with smiling looks his joy express'd,
And thus the kind inviting host address'd:

'Say now, what man is he, the man deplor'd,
So rich, so potent, whom you style your lord?
Late with such affluence and possessions bless'd,
And now in honour's glorious bed at rest.
Whoever was the warrior, he must be
To fame no stranger, nor perhaps to me;
Who (so the gods, and so the fates ordain'd)
Have wander'd many a sea, and many a land.'

'Small is the faith the prince and queen ascribe
(Replied Eumæus) to the wandering tribe:
For needy strangers still to flattery fly,
And want too oft betrays the tongue to lie.
Each vagrant traveller that touches here,
Deludes with fallacies the royal ear,
To dear remembrance makes his image rise,
And calls the springing sorrows from her eyes.
Such thou may'st be. But he whose name you crave
Moulders in earth, or welters on the wave,
Or food for fish, or dogs, his relics lie,
Or torn by birds are scatter'd through the sky.

So perish'd he: and left (for ever lost)
Much woe to all, but sure to me the most.
So mild a master never shall I find:
Less dear the parents whom I left behind,
Less soft my mother, less my father kind.
Not with such transport would my eyes run o'er,
Again to hail them in their native shore,
As lov'd Ulysses once more to embrace,
Restor'd and breathing in his natal place.
That name, for ever dread, yet ever dear,
E'en in his absence I pronounce with fear:
In my respect, he bears a prince's part;
But lives a very brother in my heart.'

Thus spoke the faithful swain, and thus rejoin'd
The master of his grief, the man of patient mind:
'Ulysses, friend! shall view his old abodes,
Distrustful as thou art, nor doubt the gods.
Nor speak I rashly, but with faith averr'd,
And what I speak attesting heaven has heard.
If so, a cloak and vesture be my meed;
Till his return no title shall I plead,
Though certain be my news, and great my need.
Whom want itself can force untruths to tell,
My soul detests him as the gates of hell.

'Thou first be witness, hospitable Jove!
And every god inspiring social love!
And witness every household power that waits
Guard of these fires, and angel of these gates!
Ere the next moon increase, or this decay,
His ancient realms Ulysses shall survey,
In blood and dust each proud oppressor mourn,
And the lost glories of his house return.'

'Nor shall that meed be thine, nor ever more
Shall lov'd Ulysses hail this happy shore

(Replied Eumæus): to the present hour
Now turn thy thought and joys within our pow'r.
From sad reflection let my soul repose;
The name of him awakes a thousand woes.
But guard him, gods! and to these arms restore!
Not his true consort can desire him more;
Not old Laertes, broken with despair;
Not young Telemachus, his blooming heir.
Alas, Telemachus! my sorrows flow
Afresh for thee, my second cause of woe!
Like some fair plant set by a heavenly hand,
He grew, he flourish'd, and he bless'd the land;
In all the youth his father's image shin'd,
Bright in his person, brighter in his mind.
What man, or god, deceiv'd his better sense,
Far on the swelling seas to wander hence?
To distant Pylos hapless is he gone,
To seek his father's fate, and find his own!
For traitors wait his way, with dire design
To end at once the great Arcesian line.
But let us leave him to their wills above;
The fates of men are in the hand of Jove.
And now, my venerable guest, declare
Your name, your parents, and your native air:
Sincere, from whence begun your course relate,
And to what ship I owe the friendly freight.'
Thus he: and thus, with prompt invention bold,
The cautious chief his ready story told:
'On dark reserve what better can prevail,
Or from the fluent tongue produce the tale,
Than when two friends, alone, in peaceful place
Confer, and wines and cates the table grace;
But most the kind inviter's cheerful face?

Thus might we sit, with social goblets crown'd,
Till the whole circle of the year goes round;
Not the whole circle of the year would close
My long narration of a life of woes.
But such was heaven's high will! Know then, I came
From sacred Crete, and from a sire of fame,
Castor Hylacides (that name he bore)
Belov'd and honour'd in his native shore;
Bless'd in his riches, in his children more.
Sprung of a handmaid, from a bought embrace,
I shar'd his kindness with his lawful race:
But when that fate, which all must undergo,
From earth remov'd him to the shades below,
The large domain his greedy sons divide,
And each was portion'd as the lots decide.
Little, alas! was left my wretched share,
Except a house, a covert from the air:
But what by niggard fortune was denied,
A willing widow's copious wealth supplied.
My valour was my plea, a gallant mind
That, true to honour, never lagg'd behind
(The sex is ever to a soldier kind).
Now wasting years my former strength confound,
And added woes have bow'd me to the ground;
Yet by the stubble you may guess the grain,
And mark the ruins of no vulgar man.
Me, Pallas gave to lead the martial storm,
And the fair ranks of battle to deform:
Me, Mars inspir'd to turn the foe to flight,
And tempt the secret ambush of the night.
Let ghastly death in all his forms appear,
I saw him not; it was not mine to fear.
Before the rest I rais'd my ready steel;
The first I met, he yielded, or he fell.

But works of peace my soul disdain'd to bear,
The rural labour, or domestic care.
To raise the mast, the missile dart to wing,
And send swift arrows from the bounding string,
Were arts the gods made grateful to my mind;
Those gods who turn (to various ends design'd)
The various thoughts and talents of mankind.
Before the Grecians touch'd the Trojan plain,
Nine times commander or by land or main,
In foreign fields I spread my glory far,
Great in the praise, rich in the spoils of war:
Thence charg'd with riches, as increas'd in fame,
To Crete return'd, an honourable name.
But when great Jove that direful war decreed,
Which rous'd all Greece, and made the mighty bleed,
Our states myself and Idomen employ
To lead their fleets, and carry death to Troy.
Nine years we warr'd: the tenth saw Ilion fall;
Homeward we sail'd, but heaven dispers'd us all.
One only month my wife enjoy'd my stay;
So will'd the god who gives and takes away.
Nine ships I mann'd, equipp'd with ready stores,
Intent to voyage to the' Egyptian shores;
In feast and sacrifice my chosen train
Six days consum'd; the seventh we plough'd the main.
Crete's ample fields diminish to our eye;
Before the Boreal blast the vessels fly:
Safe through the level seas we sweep our way;
The steersman governs, and the ships obey.
The fifth fair morn we stem the' Egyptian tide,
And tilting o'er the bay the vessels ride:
To anchor there my fellows I command,
And spies commission to explore the land.

But sway'd by lust of gain, and headlong will,
The coasts they ravage, and the natives kill.
The spreading clamour to their city flies,
And horse and foot in mingled tumult rise.
The reddening dawn reveals the circling fields
Horrid with bristly spears, and glancing shields.
Jove thunder'd on their side. Our guilty head
We turn'd to flight: the gathering vengeance spread
On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lie dead.
I then explor'd my thought, what course to prove?
(And sure the thought was dictated by Jove;
O had he left me to that happier doom,
And sav'd a life of miseries to come!)
The radiant helmet from my brows unlac'd,
And low on earth my shield and javelin cast,
I meet the monarch with a suppliant's face,
Approach his chariot, and his knees embrace.
He heard, he sav'd, he plac'd me at his side:
My state he pitied, and my tears he dried,
Restrain'd the rage the vengeful foe express'd,
And turn'd the deadly weapons from my breast.
Pious! to guard the hospitable rite,
And fearing Jove, whom mercy's works delight.
'In Egypt thus with peace and plenty bless'd
I liv'd (and happy still had liv'd) a guest:
On seven bright years successive blessings wait;
The next chang'd all the colour of my fate.
A false Phœnician, of insidious mind,
Vers'd in vile arts, and foe to humankind,
With semblance fair invites me to his home;
I seiz'd the proffer (ever fond to roam);
Domestic in his faithless roof I stay'd,
Till the swift sun his annual circle made.

To Lybia then he meditates the way;
With guileful art a stranger to betray,
And sell to bondage in a foreign land:
Much doubting, yet compell'd, I quit the strand.
Through the mid seas the nimble pinnace sails,
Aloof from Crete, before the northern gales:
But when remote her chalky cliffs we lost,
And far from ken of any other coast,
When all was wild expanse of sea and air,
Then doom'd high Jove due vengeance to prepare.
He hung a night of horrors o'er their head,
(The shaded ocean blacken'd as it spread)
He launch'd the fiery bolt; from pole to pole
Broad burst the lightnings, deep the thunders roll;
In giddy rounds the whirling ship is tost,
And all in clouds of smoth'ring sulphur lost.
As from a hanging rock's tremendous height,
The sable crows with intercepted flight
Drop endlong; sear'd, and black with sulphurous hue,
So from the deck are hurl'd the ghastly crew.
Such end the wicked found! But Jove's intent
Was yet to save the' oppress'd and innocent.
Plac'd on the mast (the last recourse of life)
With winds and waves I held unequal strife;
For nine long days the billows tilting o'er,
The tenth soft wafts me to Thresprotia's shore.
The monarch's son a shipwreck'd wretch reliev'd,
The sire with hospitable rites receiv'd,
And in his palace like a brother plac'd,
With gifts of price and gorgeous garments grac'd.
While here I sojourn'd, oft I heard the fame
How late Ulysses to the country came,
How lov'd, how honour'd in this court he stay'd,
And here his whole collected treasure laid;

I saw myself the vast unnumber'd store
Of steel elaborate, and refulgent ore,
And brass high heap'd amidst the regal dome;
Immense supplies for ages yet to come!
Meantime he voyag'd to explore the will
Of Jove on high Dodona's holy hill,
What means might best his safe return avail,
To come in pomp, or bear a secret sail?
Full oft has Phidon, whilst he pour'd the wine,
Attesting solemn all the powers divine,
That soon Ulysses would return, declar'd,
The sailors waiting, and the ships prepar'd.
But first the king dismiss'd me from his shores,
For fair Dulichium crown'd with fruitful stores;
To good Acastus' friendly care consign'd:
But other counsels pleas'd the sailor's mind:
New frauds were plotted by the faithless train,
And misery demands me once again.
Soon as remote from shore they plough the wave,
With ready hands they rush to seize their slave;
Then with these tatter'd rags they wrapp'd me round,
(Stripp'd of my own) and to the vessel bound.
At eve, at Ithaca's delightful land
The ship arriv'd: forth-issuing on the sand,
They sought repast; while to the' unhappy kind,
The pitying gods themselves my chains unbind.
Soft I descended, to the sea applied
My naked breast, and shot along the tide.
Soon pass'd beyond their sight, I left the flood,
And took the spreading shelter of the wood.
Their prise escap'd, the faithless pirates mourn'd,
But deem'd inquiry vain, and to their ship return'd.
Screen'd by protecting gods from hostile eyes
They led me to a good man and a wise;

To live beneath thy hospitable care,
And wait the woes heaven dooms me yet to bear.'
'Unhappy guest! whose sorrows touch my mind!
(Thus good Eumæus with a sigh rejoin'd)
For real sufferings since I grieve sincere,
Check not with fallacies the springing tear;
Nor turn the passion into groundless joy
For him, whom heaven has destin'd to destroy.
Oh! had he perish'd on some well-fought day,
Or in his friends' embraces died away!
That grateful Greece with streaming eyes might raise
Historic marbles, to record his praise:
His praise, eternal on the faithful stone,
Had with transmissive honours grac'd his son.
Now snatch'd by harpies to the dreary coast,
Sunk is the hero, and his glory lost!
While pensive in this solitary den,
Far from gay cities, and the ways of men,
I linger life; nor to the court repair,
But when the constant queen commands my care;
Or when, to taste her hospitable board,
Some guest arrives, with rumours of her lord;
And these indulge their want, and those their woe,
And here the tears, and there the goblets flow.
By many such have I been warn'd; but chief
By one Ætolian robb'd of all belief,
Whose hap it was to this our roof to roam,
For murder banish'd from his native home:
He swore, Ulysses on the coast of Crete
Stay'd but a season to refit his fleet;
A few revolving months should waft him o'er,
Fraught with bold warriors, and a boundless store.
O thou! whom age has taught to understand,
And heaven has guided with a favouring hand;

On god or mortal to obtrude a lie
Forbear, and dread to flatter, as to die.
Not for such ends my house and heart are free,
But dear respect to Jove, and charity.'
'And why, O swain of unbelieving mind!
(Thus quick replied the wisest of mankind)
Doubt you my oath? yet more my faith to try,
A solemn compact let us ratify,
And witness every power that rules the sky!
If here Ulysses from his labours rest,
Be then my prize a tunic and a vest;
And, where my hopes invite me, straight transport
In safety to Dulichium's friendly court.
But if he greets not thy desiring eye,
Hurl me from yon dread precipice on high;
The due reward of fraud and perjury.'
'Doubtless, O guest! great laud and praise were
(Replied the swain) for spotless faith divine, [mine
If, after social rites and gifts bestow'd,
I stain'd my hospitable hearth with blood:
How would the gods my righteous toils succeed,
And bless the hand that made a stranger bleed?
No more—the' approaching hours of silent night
First claim refection, then to rest invite;
Beneath our humble cottage let us haste,
And here, unenvied, rural dainties taste.'
Thus commun'd these; while to their lowly dome
The full-fed swine return'd with evening home;
Compell'd, reluctant, to their several sties,
With din obstreperous, and ungrateful cries.
Then to the slaves—'Now from the herd the best
Select, in honour of our foreign guest:
With him, let us the genial banquet share,
For great and many are the griefs we bear;

While those who from our labours heap their board,
Blaspheme their feeder, and forget their lord.'
Thus speaking, with dispatchful hand he took
A weighty axe, and cleft the solid oak;
This on the earth he pil'd; a boar full-fed,
Of five years age, before the pile was led:
The swain, whom acts of piety delight,
Observant of the gods, begins the rite;
First shears the forehead of the bristly boar,
And suppliant stands, invoking every power
To speed Ulysses to his native shore.
A knotty stake then aiming at his head,
Down dropt he groaning, and the spirit fled.
The scorching flames climb round on every side:
Then the sing'd members they with skill divide;
On these, in rolls of fat involv'd with art,
The choicest morsels lay from every part.
Some in the flames, bestrow'd with flour, they threw;
Some cut in fragments, from the forks they drew:
These while on several tables they dispose,
As priest himself the blameless rustic rose;
Expert the destin'd victim to dispart
In seven just portions, pure of hand and heart.
One sacred to the nymphs apart they lay;
Another to the winged son of May:
The rural tribe in common share the rest,
The king the chine, the honour of the feast,
Who sat delighted at his servant's board:
The faithful servant joy'd his unknown lord.
'O be thou dear (Ulysses cried) to Jove,
As well thou claim'st a grateful stranger's love!'
'Be then thy thanks (the bounteous swain replied)
Enjoyment of the good the gods provide.

From God's own hand descend our joys and woes;
These he decrees, and he but suffers those:
All power is his, and whatsoe'er he wills,
The will itself, omnipotent, fulfils.
This said, the first fruits to the gods he gave;
Then pour'd of offer'd wine the sable wave:
In great Ulysses' hand he plac'd the bowl,
He sat, and sweet refection cheer'd his soul.
The bread from canisters Mesaulius gave,
(Eumæus' proper treasure bought this slave,
And led from Taphos, to attend his board,
A servant added to his absent lord)
His task it was the wheaten loaves to lay,
And from the banquet take the bowls away.
And now the rage of hunger was repress'd,
And each betakes him to his couch to rest.
Now came the night, and darkness cover'd o'er
The face of things; the winds began to roar;
The driving storm the watery west wind pours,
And Jove descends in deluges of show'rs.
Studious of rest and warmth, Ulysses lies,
Foreseeing from the first the storm would rise;
In mere necessity of coat and cloak,
With artful preface to his host he spoke: [grace;
'Hear me, my friends! who this good banquet
'Tis sweet to play the fool in time and place,
And wine can of their wits the wise beguile,
Make the sage frolic, and the serious smile,
The grave in merry measures frisk about,
And many a long-repeated word bring out.
Since to be talkative I now commence,
Let wit cast off the sullen yoke of sense.
Once I was strong (would heaven restore those days),
And with my betters claim'd a share of praise.

Ulysses, Menelaus, led forth a band,
And join'd me with them ('twas their own command),
A deathful ambush for the foe to lay;
Beneath Troy walls by night we took our way:
There, clad in arms, along the marshes spread,
We made the osier-fringed bank our bed.
Full soon the inclemency of heaven I feel,
Nor had these shoulders covering, but of steel.
Sharp blew the north: snow whitening all the fields
Froze with the blast, and gathering glaz'd our shields.
There all but I, well fenc'd with cloak and vest,
Lay cover'd by their ample shields at rest.
Fool that I was! I left behind my own;
The skill of weather and of winds unknown,
And trusted to my coat and shield alone!
When now was wasted more than half the night,
And the stars faded at approaching light;
Sudden I jogg'd Ulysses, who was laid
Fast by my side, and, shivering, thus I said:
"Here longer in this field I cannot lie,
The winter pinches, and with cold I die,
And die asham'd (O wisest of mankind),
The only fool who left his cloak behind."
'He thought, and answer'd: (hardly waking yet,
Sprung in his mind the momentary wit;
That wit, which or in council, or in fight,
Still met the emergence, and determin'd right)
"Hush thee, he cried, (soft-whispering in my ear)
Speak not a word, lest any Greek may hear—"
And then (supporting on his arm his head)
"Hear me, companions! (thus aloud he said)
Methinks too distant from the fleet we lie:
E'en now a vision stood before my eye,
And sure the warning vision was from high:

Let from among us some swift courier rise,
Haste to the general, and demand supplies.'
'Upstarted Thoas straight, Andræmon's son,
Nimbly he rose, and cast his garment down;
Instant, the racer vanish'd off the ground;
That instant, in his cloak I wrapp'd me round:
And safe I slept, till brightly-dawning shone
The morn, conspicuous on her golden throne.
'O were my strength as then, as then my age,
Some friend would fence me from the winter's rage.
Yet tatter'd as I look, I challeng'd then
The honours, and the offices of men:
Some master or some servant would allow
A cloak and vest—but I am nothing now!'
'Well hast thou spoke (rejoin'd the' attentive swain),
Thy lips let fall no idle words or vain!
Nor garment shalt thou want, nor aught beside
Meet for the wandering suppliant to provide.
But in the morning take thy clothes again,
For here one vest suffices every swain;
No change of garments to our hinds is known:
But when return'd, the good Ulysses' son
With better hand shall grace with fit attires
His guest, and send thee where thy soul desires.'
The honest herdsman rose, as this he said,
And drew before the hearth the stranger's bed:
The fleecy spoils of sheep, a goat's rough hide,
He spreads: and adds a mantle thick and wide:
With store to heap above him, and below,
And guard each quarter as the tempests blow.
There lay the king, and all the rest supine;
All, but the careful master of the swine:
Forth hasted he to tend his bristly care:
Well arm'd, and fenc'd against nocturnal air;

His weighty falchion o'er his shoulder tied:
His shaggy cloak a mountain goat supplied:
With his broad spear, the dread of dogs and men,
He seeks his lodging in the rocky den.
There to the tusky herd he bends his way,
Where, screen'd from Boreas, high o'er-arch'd they
lay.

THE

FIFTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE RETURN OF TELEMACHUS.

THE goddess Minerva commands Telemachus in a vision to return to Ithaca. Pisistratus and he take leave of Menelaüs, and arrive at Pylos: where they part; and Telemachus sets sail, after having received on board Theoclymenus the soothsayer. The scene then changes to the cottage of Eumæus, who entertains Ulysses with a recital of his adventures. In the meantime Telemachus arrives on the coast; and, sending the vessel to the town, proceeds by himself to the lodge of Eumæus.

THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XV.

Now had Minerva reach'd those ample plains,
Fam'd for the dance, where Menelaüs reigns.
Anxious she flies to great Ulysses' heir,
His instant voyage challeng'd all her care.
Beneath the royal portico display'd,
With Nestor's son, Telemachus was laid:
In sleep profound the son of Nestor lies;
Not thine, Ulysses! care unseal'd his eyes:
Restless he griev'd, with various fears oppress'd,
And all thy fortunes roll'd within his breast.
When, 'O Telemachus! (the goddess said)
Too long in vain, too widely hast thou stray'd:
Thus leaving careless thy paternal right
The robbers' prize, the prey to lawless might.
On fond pursuits neglectful while you roam,
E'en now the hand of rapine sacks the dome.
Hence to Atrides; and his leave implore
To launch thy vessel for thy natal shore:
Fly, whilst thy mother virtuous yet withstands
Her kindred's wishes, and her sire's commands.
Through both, Eurymachus pursues the dame;
And with the noblest gifts asserts his claim.

Hence therefore, while thy stores thy own remain,
Thou know'st the practice of the female train;
Lost in the children of the present spouse,
They slight the pledges of their former vows:
Their love is always with the lover past;
Still the succeeding flame expels the last.
Let o'er thy house some chosen maid preside,
Till heaven decrees to bless thee in a bride.
But now thy more attentive ears incline;
Observe the warnings of a power divine:
For thee their snares the suitor lords shall lay
In Samos' sands, or straits of Ithaca:
To seize thy life shall lurk the murderous band,
Ere yet thy footsteps press thy native land.
No——sooner far their riot and their lust
All covering earth shall bury deep in dust!
Then distant from the scatter'd islands steer,
Nor let the night retard thy full career;
Thy heavenly guardian shall instruct the gales
To smooth thy passage, and supply thy sails:
And when at Ithaca thy labour ends,
Send to the town thy vessel with thy friends;
But seek thou first the master of the swine,
(For still to thee his loyal thoughts incline)
There pass the night: while he his course pursues
To bring Penelope the wish'd-for news,
That thou safe sailing from the Pylian strand
Art come to bless her in thy native land.'
Thus spoke the goddess; and resum'd her flight
To the pure regions of eternal light.
Meanwhile Pisistratus he gently shakes,
And with these words the slumbering youth awakes:
'Rise, son of Nestor! for the road prepare,
And join the harness'd coursers to the car.'

'What cause (he cried) can justify our flight,
To tempt the dangers of forbidding night?
Here wait we rather, till approaching day
Shall prompt our speed, and point the ready way.
Nor think of flight before the Spartan king
Shall bid farewell, and bounteous presents bring;
Gifts, which, to distant ages safely stor'd,
The sacred act of friendship shall record.'
Thus he. But when the dawn bestreak'd the east,
The king from Helen rose, and sought his guest.
As soon as his approach the hero knew,
The splendid mantle round him first he threw,
Then o'er his ample shoulders whirl'd the cloak,
Respectful met the monarch, and bespoke:
'Hail, great Atrides, favour'd of high Jove!
Let not thy friends in vain for licence move.
Swift let us measure back the watery way,
Nor check our speed, impatient of delay.'
'If with desire so strong thy bosom glows,
Ill (said the king) should I thy wish oppose;
For oft in others freely I reprove
The ill-tim'd efforts of officious love;
Who love too much, hate in the like extreme,
And both the golden mean alike condemn.
Alike he thwarts the hospitable end,
Who drives the free, or stays the hasty friend;
True friendship's laws are by this rule express'd,
Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.
Yet stay, my friends, and in your chariot take
The noblest presents that our love can make:
Meantime commit we to our women's care
Some choice domestic viands to prepare:
The traveller, rising from the banquet gay,
Eludes the labours of the tedious way.

Then if a wider course shall rather please
Through spacious Argos, and the realms of Greece,
Atrides in his chariot shall attend;
Himself thy convoy to each royal friend.
No prince will let Ulysses' heir remove
Without some pledge, some monument of love:
These will the caldron, these the tripod give,
From those the well-pair'd mules we shall receive,
Or bowl emboss'd whose golden figures live.'
To whom the youth, for prudence fam'd, replied:
'O monarch, care of heaven! thy people's pride!
No friend in Ithaca my place supplies;
No powerful hands are there, no watchful eyes:
My stores expos'd, and fenceless house, demand
The speediest succour from my guardian hand;
Lest in a search too anxious and too vain
Of one lost joy, I lose what yet remain.'
His purpose when the generous warrior heard,
He charg'd the household cates to be prepar'd.
Now with the dawn, from his adjoining home,
Was Boethœdes Eteoneus come;
Swift as the word he forms the rising blaze,
And o'er the coals the smoking fragments lays.
Meantime the king, his son, and Helen, went
Where the rich wardrobe breath'd a costly scent.
The king selected from the glittering rows
A bowl: the prince a silver beaker chose.
The beauteous queen revolv'd with careful eyes
Her various textures of unnumber'd dies,
And chose the largest; with no vulgar art
Her own fair hands embroider'd every part:
Beneath the rest it lay divinely bright,
Like radiant Hesper o'er the gems of night.

Then with each gift they hasten'd to their guest,
And thus the king Ulysses' heir address'd:
'Since fix'd are thy resolves, may thundering Jove
With happiest omens thy desires approve!
This silver bowl, whose costly margins shine
Enchas'd with gold, this valued gift be thine:
To me this present, of Vulcanian frame,
From Sidon's hospitable monarch came;
To thee we now consign the precious load,
The pride of kings, and labour of a god.'
Then gave the cup; while Megapenthes brought
The silver vase with living sculpture wrought.
The beauteous queen, advancing next, display'd
The shining veil, and thus endearing said:
'Accept, dear youth, this monument of love,
Long since, in better days, by Helen wove:
Safe in thy mother's care the vesture lay,
To deck thy pride, and grace thy nuptial day.
Meantime may'st thou with happiest speed regain
Thy stately palace, and thy wide domain.'
She said, and gave the veil:—with grateful look
The prince the variegated present took.
And now, when through the royal dome they pass'd,
High on a throne the king each stranger plac'd.
A golden ewer the' attendant damsel brings,
Replete with water from the crystal springs;
With copious streams the shining vase supplies
A silver laver of capacious size.
They wash. The tables in fair order spread,
The glittering canisters are crown'd with bread;
Viands of various kinds allure the taste,
Of choicest sort and savour; rich repast!
While Eteoneus portions out the shares,
Atrides' son the purple draught prepares.

And now (each sated with the genial feast,
And the short rage of thirst and hunger ceas'd)
Ulysses' son, with his illustrious friend,
The horses join, the polish'd car ascend:
Along the court the fiery steeds rebound,
And the wide portal echoes to the sound.
The king precedes; a bowl with fragrant wine
(Libation destin'd to the powers divine)
His right hand held: before the steeds he stands,
Then, mix'd with prayers, he utters these commands:
'Farewell and prosper, youths!—let Nestor know
What grateful thoughts still in this bosom glow,
For all the proofs of his paternal care,
Through the long dangers of the ten years' war.'
'Ah! doubt not our report (the prince rejoin'd)
Of all the virtues of thy generous mind.
And oh! return'd, might we Ulysses meet!
To him thy presents show, thy words repeat:
How will each speech his grateful wonder raise?
How will each gift indulge us in thy praise?'
Scarce ended thus the prince, when on the right
Advanc'd the bird of Jove; auspicious sight!
A milk-white fowl his clenching talons bore,
With care domestic pamper'd at the floor.
Peasants in vain with threatening cries pursue,
In solemn speed the bird majestic flew
Full dexter to the car: the prosperous sight
Fill'd every breast with wonder and delight.
But Nestor's son the cheerful silence broke,
And in these words the Spartan chief bespoke:
'Say if to us the gods these omens send,
Or fates peculiar to thyself portend?' [press'd,
Whilst yet the monarch paus'd, with doubts op-
The beauteous queen reliev'd his labouring breast.

'Hear me (she cried) to whom the gods have given
To read this sign, and mystic sense of heaven.
As thus the plumy sovereign of the air
Left on the mountain's brow his callow care,
And wander'd through the wide ethereal way
To pour his wrath on yon luxurious prey;
So shall thy godlike father, toss'd in vain
Through all the dangers of the boundless main,
Arrive (or is perchance already come)
From slaughter'd gluttons to release the dome.'
'Oh! if this promis'd bliss by thundering Jove
(The prince replied) stand fix'd in fate above;
To thee, as to some god, I'll temples raise,
And crown thy altars with the costly blaze.'
He said; and, bending o'er his chariot, flung
Athwart the fiery steeds the smarting thong;
The bounding shafts upon the harness play,
Till night descending intercepts the way.
To Diocles, at Pheræ, they repair,
Whose boasted sire was sacred Alpheus' heir;
With him all night the youthful strangers stay'd,
Nor found the hospitable rites unpaid.
But soon as morning, from her orient bed,
Had ting'd the mountains with her earliest red,
They join'd the steeds, and on the chariot sprung;
The brazen portals in their passage rung.
To Pylos soon they came: when thus begun
To Nestor's heir Ulysses' godlike son:
'Let not Pisistratus in vain be press'd,
Nor unconsenting bear his friend's request;
His friend by long hereditary claim,
In toils his equal, and in years the same.
No further from our vessel, I implore,
The coursers drive; but lash them to the shore.

Too long thy father would his friend detain;
I dread his proffer'd kindness, urg'd in vain.'
The hero paus'd, and ponder'd this request,
While love and duty warr'd within his breast.
At length resolv'd, he turn'd his ready hand,
And lash'd his panting coursers to the strand.
There, while within the poop with care he stor'd
The regal presents of the Spartan lord;
'With speed be gone (said he), call every mate,
Ere yet to Nestor I the tale relate.
'Tis true, the fervor of his generous heart
Brooks no repulse, nor could'st thou soon depart;
Himself will seek thee here, nor wilt thou find,
In words alone, the Pylian monarch kind.
But when arriv'd he thy return shall know,
How will his breast with honest fury glow?'
This said, the sounding strokes his horses fire,
And soon he reach'd the palace of his sire.
'Now (cried Telemachus) with speedy care
Hoist every sail, and every oar prepare.'
Swift as the word his willing mates obey,
And seize their seats, impatient for the sea.
Meantime the prince with sacrifice adores
Minerva, and her guardian aid implores;
When lo! a wretch ran breathless to the shore,
New from his crime, and reeking yet with gore:
A seer he was, from great Melampus sprung,
Melampus, who in Pylos flourish'd long,
Till, urg'd by wrongs, a foreign realm he chose,
Far from the hateful cause of all his woes.
Neleus his treasures one long year detains;
As long, he groan'd in Phylacus's chains:
Meantime, what anguish and what rage combin'd,
For lovely Pero rack'd his labouring mind!

Yet 'scap'd he death; and, vengeful of his wrong,
To Pylos drove the lowing herds along:
Then (Neleus vanquish'd, and consign'd the fair
To Bias' arms) he sought a foreign air:
Argos the rich for his retreat he chose,
There form'd his empire; there his palace rose.
From him Antiphates and Mantius came:
The first begot Oïcleus great in fame,
And he Amphiaraus, immortal name!
The people's saviour, and divinely wise,
Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the skies,
Yet short his date of life! by female pride he dies.
From Mantius, Clitus; whom Aurora's love
Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above:
And Polyphides; on whom Phœbus shone
With fullest rays, Amphiaraus now gone;
In Hyperesia's groves he made abode,
And taught mankind the counsels of the god.
From him sprung Theoclymenus, who found
(The sacred wine yet foaming on the ground)
Telemachus: whom, as to heaven he press'd
His ardent vows, the stranger thus address'd:
'O thou! that dost thy happy course prepare
With pure libations, and with solemn pray'r;
By that dread power to whom thy vows are paid;
By all the lives of these; thy own dear head;
Declare, sincerely, to no foe's demand,
Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land.'
'Prepare then (said Telemachus) to know
A tale from falsehood free, not free from woe.
From Ithaca, of royal birth, I came,
And great Ulysses (ever honour'd name!)
Was once my sire: though now for ever lost
In Stygian gloom he glides a pensive ghost!

Whose fate inquiring, through the world we rove;
The last, the wretched proof of filial love.'
The stranger then: 'Nor shall I aught conceal,
But the dire secret of my fate reveal.
Of my own tribe an Argive wretch I slew;
Whose powerful friends the luckless deed pursue
With unrelenting rage, and force from home
The blood-stain'd exile, ever doom'd to roam.
But bear, O bear me o'er yon azure flood;
Receive the suppliant! spare my destin'd blood!'
'Stranger (replied the prince) securely rest
Affianc'd in our faith: henceforth our guest.'
Thus affable, Ulysses' godlike heir
Takes from the stranger's hand the glittering spear:
He climbs the ship, ascends the stern with haste,
And by his side the guest accepted plac'd.
The chief his orders gives: the' obedient band
With due observance wait the chief's command:
With speed the mast they rear, with speed unbind
The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind.
Minerva calls; the ready gales obey
With rapid speed to whirl them o'er the sea.
Crunus they pass'd, next Chalcis roll'd away,
When thickening darkness clos'd the doubtful day;
The silver Phæa's glittering rills they lost,
And skimm'd along by Elis' sacred coast.
Then cautious through the rocky reaches wind,
And, turning sudden, shun the death design'd.
Meantime the king, Eumæus, and the rest,
Sat in the cottage, at their rural feast:
The banquet past, and satiate every man,
To try his host Ulysses thus began: [guest;
'Yet one night more, my friends, indulge your
The last I purpose in your walls to rest:

To-morrow for myself I must provide,
And only ask your counsel, and a guide;
Patient to roam the street, by hunger led,
And bless the friendly hand that gives me bread.
There in Ulysses' roof I may relate
Ulysses' wanderings to his royal mate;
Or, mingling with the suitors' haughty train,
Not undeserving, some support obtain.
Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,
Patron of industry and manual arts:
Few can with me in dextrous works contend,
The pyre to build, the stubborn oak to rend;
To turn the tasteful viand o'er the flame;
Or foam the goblet with a purple stream.
Such are the tasks of men of mean estate,
Whom fortune dooms to serve the rich and great.'

'Alas! (Eumæus with a sigh rejoin'd)
How sprung a thought so monstrous in thy mind?
If on that godless race thou would'st attend,
Fate owes thee sure a miserable end!
Their wrongs and blasphemies ascend the sky,
And pull descending vengeance from on high.
Not such, my friend, the servants of their feast;
A blooming train in rich embroidery dress'd.
With earth's whole tribute the bright table bends;
And smiling round celestial youth attends.
Stay then: no eye askance beholds thee here;
Sweet is thy converse to each social ear;
Well pleas'd, and pleasing, in our cottage rest,
Till good Telemachus accepts his guest
With genial gifts, and change of fair attires,
And safe conveys thee where thy soul desires.'

To him the man of woes:—'O gracious Jove!
Reward this stranger's hospitable love,

Who knows the son of sorrow to relieve,
Cheers the sad heart, nor lets affliction grieve.
Of all the ills unhappy mortals know,
A life of wanderings is the greatest woe:
On all their weary ways wait care and pain,
And pine and penury, a meagre train.
To such a man since harbour you afford,
Relate the further fortunes of your lord;
What cares his mother's tender breast engage,
And sire, forsaken on the verge of age;
Beneath the sun prolong they yet their breath,
Or range the house of darkness and of death?
To whom the swain: 'Attend what you inquire:
Laertes lives, the miserable sire;—
Lives, but implores of every power to lay
The burden down, and wishes for the day.
Torn from his offspring in the eve of life,
Torn from the embraces of his tender wife,
Sole, and all comfortless, he wastes away
Old age, untimely posting ere his day.
She too, sad mother! for Ulysses lost
Pin'd out her bloom, and vanish'd to a ghost.
(So dire a fate, ye righteous gods! avert,
From every friendly, every feeling heart!)
While yet she was, though clouded o'er with grief,
Her pleasing converse minister'd relief:
With Climene, her youngest daughter, bred,
One roof contain'd us, and one table fed.
But when the softly stealing pace of time
Crept on from childhood into youthful prime,
To Samos' isle she sent the wedded fair;
Me to the fields, to tend the rural care;
Array'd in garments her own hands had wove,
Nor less the darling object of her love.

Her hapless death my brighter days o'ercast,
Yet Providence deserts me not at last;
My present labours food and drink procure,
And more, the pleasure to relieve the poor.
Small is the comfort from the queen to hear
Unwelcome news, or vex the royal ear;
Blank and discountenanc'd the servants stand,
Nor dare to question where the proud command.
No profit springs beneath usurping pow'rs:
Want feeds not there where luxury devours;
Nor harbours charity where riot reigns;
Proud are the lords, and wretched are the swains.'
The suffering chief at this began to melt:—
'And, oh Eumæus! thou (he cries) hast felt
The spite of fortune too! her cruel hand
Snatch'd thee an infant from thy native land!
Snatch'd from thy parents' arms, thy parents' eyes,
To early wants! a man of miseries!
Thy whole sad story, from its first, declare:
Sunk the fair city by the rage of war,
Where once thy parents dwelt? or did they keep,
In humbler life, the lowing herds and sheep?
So left perhaps to tend the fleecy train,
Rude pirates seiz'd, and shipp'd thee o'er the main?
Doom'd a fair prize to grace some prince's board,
The worthy purchase of a foreign lord.'
'If then my fortunes can delight my friend,
A story, fruitful of events, attend:
Another's sorrow may thy ear enjoy;
And wine the lengthen'd intervals employ.
Long nights the now declining year bestows:
A part we consecrate to soft repose;
A part in pleasing talk we entertain,
For too much rest itself becomes a pain.

Let those, whom sleep invites, the call obey,
Their cares resuming with the dawning day:
Here let us feast;—and to the feast be join'd
Discourse, the sweeter banquet of the mind;—
Review the series of our lives, and taste
The melancholy joy of evils past:
For he who much has suffer'd, much will know;
And pleas'd remembrance builds delight on woe.
'Above Ortygia lies an isle of fame,
Far hence remote, and Syria is the name:
(There curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace
The sun's diurnal, and his annual race)
Not large, but fruitful; stor'd with grass to keep
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep.
Her sloping hills the mantling vines adorn,
And her rich valleys wave with golden corn.
No want, no famine, the glad natives know,
Nor sink by sickness to the shades below:
But when a length of years unnerves the strong,
Apollo comes, and Cynthia comes along;
They bend the silver bow with tender skill,
And void of pain the silent arrows kill.
Two equal tribes this fertile land divide,
Where two fair cities rise with equal pride.
But both in constant peace one prince obey,
And Ctesius there, my father, holds the sway.
Freighted, it seems, with toys of every sort,
A ship of Sidon anchor'd in our port;
What time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,
Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land.
This nymph, where anchor'd the Phœnician train,
To wash her robes descending to the main,
A smooth-tongued sailor won her to his mind;
(For love deceives the best of woman-kind)

A sudden trust from sudden liking grew;
She told her name, her race, and all she knew.
'I too (she cried) from glorious Sidon came,
'My father Arybas, of wealthy fame;
But snatch'd by pirates from my native place,
The Taphians sold me to this man's embrace."
"Haste then (the false designing youth replied)
Haste to thy country: love shall be thy guide:
Haste to thy father's house, thy father's breast;
For still he lives, and lives with riches bless'd."
"Swear first (she cried) ye sailors! to restore
A wretch in safety to her native shore."
Swift as she ask'd, the ready sailors swore.
She then proceeds: "Now let our compact made
Be nor by signal nor by word betray'd,
Nor near me any of your crew descried
By road frequented, or by fountain side.
Be silence still our guard. The monarch's spies
(For watchful age is ready to surmise)
Are still at hand; and this, reveal'd, must be
Death to yourselves, eternal chains to me.
Your vessel loaded, and your traffic pass'd,
Dispatch a wary messenger with haste:
Then gold and costly treasures will I bring,
And more, the infant offspring of the king.
Him, child-like wandering forth, I'll lead away,
(A noble prize!) and to your ship convey."
'Thus spoke the dame, and homeward took the road.
A year they traffic, and their vessel load.
Their stores complete, and ready now to weigh,
A spy was sent their summons to convey:
An artist to my father's palace came,
With gold and amber chains, elaborate frame:

Each female eye the glittering links employ;
They turn, review, and cheapen every toy.
He took the' occasion as they stood intent,
Gave her the sign, and to his vessel went.
She straight pursued, and seiz'd my willing arm;
I follow'd smiling, innocent of harm.
Three golden goblets in the porch she found;
(The guests not enter'd, but the table crown'd)
Hid in her fraudful bosom, these she bore.
Now set the sun, and darken'd all the shore:
Arriving then, where tilting on the tides
Prepar'd to launch the freighted vessel rides,
Aboard they heave us, mount their decks, and sweep
With level oar along the glassy deep.
Six calmy days and six smooth nights we sail,
And constant Jove supplied the gentle gale.
The seventh, the fraudful wretch (no cause descried)
Touch'd by Diana's vengeful arrow died.
Down drop'd the caitiff-corpse, a worthless load,
Down to the deep; there roll'd the future food
Of fierce sea-wolves, and monsters of the flood.
An helpless infant, I remain'd behind:
Thence borne to Ithaca by wave and wind;
Sold to Laertes, by divine command,
And now adopted to a foreign land."

To him the king: 'Reciting thus thy cares,
My secret soul in all thy sorrow shares:
But one choice blessing (such is Jove's high will)
Has sweeten'd all thy bitter draught of ill:
Torn from thy country to no hapless end,
The gods have, in a master, given a friend.
Whatever frugal nature needs is thine,
(For she needs little) daily bread and wine.

While I, so many wanderings past and woes,
Live but on what thy poverty bestows.'
So pass'd in pleasing dialogue away
The night: then down to short repose they lay;
Till radiant rose the messenger of day.
While in the port of Ithaca, the band
Of young Telemachus approach'd the land;
Their sails they loos'd, they lash'd the mast aside,
And cast their anchors, and the cables tied:
Then, on the breezy shore descending, join
In grateful banquet o'er the rosy wine.
When thus the prince: 'Now each his course pursue;
I to the fields, and to the city you.
Long absent hence, I dedicate this day
My swains to visit, and the works survey.
Expect me with the morn, to pay the skies
Our debt of safe return, in feast and sacrifice.'
Then Theoclymenus: 'But who shall lend,
Meantime, protection to thy stranger-friend?
Straight to the queen and palace shall I fly;
Or, yet more distant, to some lord apply?'
The prince return'd:—'Renown'd in days of yore
Has stood our father's hospitable door;
No other roof a stranger should receive,
Nor other hands than ours the welcome give.
But in my absence riot fills the place:
Nor bears the modest queen a stranger's face;
From noiseful revel far remote she flies;
But rarely seen, or seen with weeping eyes.
No:——let Eurymachus receive my guest;
Of nature courteous, and by far the best;

He wooes the queen with more respectful flame,
And emulates her former husband's fame.
With what success, 'tis Jove's alone to know,
And the hop'd nuptials turn to joy or woe.'
Thus speaking, on the right up soar'd in air
The hawk, Apollo's swift-wing'd messenger;
His deathful pounces tore a trembling dove:
The clotted feathers, scatter'd from above,
Between the hero and the vessel pour
Thick plumage, mingled with a sanguine show'r.
The' observing augur took the prince aside,
Seiz'd by the hand, and thus prophetic cried:
'Yon bird that dexter cuts the' aërial road,
Rose ominous, nor flies without a god!—
No race but thine shall Ithaca obey:
To thine, for ages, heaven decrees the sway.'
'Succeed the omen, gods! (the youth rejoin'd)
Soon shall my bounties speak a grateful mind;
And soon each envied happiness attend
The man who calls Telemachus his friend.'
Then to Peiræus: 'Thou whom time has prov'd
A faithful servant, by thy prince belov'd!
Till we returning shall our guest demand,
Accept this charge, with honour, at our hand.'
To this Peiræus: 'Joyful I obey;
Well pleas'd the hospitable rites to pay.
The presence of thy guest shall best reward
(If long thy stay) the absence of my lord.'
'With that, their anchors he commands to weigh,
Mount the tall bark and launch into the sea.
All with obedient haste forsake the shores,
And plac'd in order, spread their equal oars.
Then from the deck the prince his sandals takes;
Pois'd in his hand the pointed javelin shakes.

They part; while, lessening from the hero's view,
Swift to the town the well-row'd galley flew:
The hero trod the margin of the main,
And reach'd the mansion of his faithful swain.

END OF VOL. II.

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